

## PRAISE FOR FRANCIS NALLY

“perhaps I’m a ‘normie’ then, because it is  
certainly not good enough for me.”  
– Adam Parfrey

“lolol asian pill. idk man shit is crazy in  
general right now. wild times.” – Sam Hyde

“The alt-right is atrocious and the fact that  
you’re giving those morons oxygen is more  
than enough to dissuade me from appearing on  
your show.” – Chris Korda

“Pilleater embodies the harmonic  
whimsicality that Elliot Rodger might have  
realized, had he channeled his emotions more  
constructively and stuck to Asian chicks.”  
– Brandon Adamson, author of Beatnik Fascism

“Pilleater inherently understands the alt-  
right and alt-left are empty signifiers of the  
same collective – rudderless, underdeveloped  
males. Almond Eyes, Baby Face dares to  
envision a newly-grafted race, one willing to  
pick up arms for its survival. It is  
refreshing to see such dangerous  
thoughtcrime still being practiced in these  
ultra-puritanical times.” – James Nulick,  
author of Valencia

"I wish you well in what will undoubtedly be  
an extended grieving process as a scorned  
fan." - Jim Goad

"xoxo." - Jamie Stewart of Xiu Xiu

"The leading Asian-Aryan Alt-Right  
intellectual of his generation." - Luke Ford

"Well, I like that is good, clean writing, no  
literary pretension. Your own original  
manifesto on Asian girls, a subject I know  
little about. It would be too much work for me  
to critique, something I never like to do. For  
all I know, you could have a hit on your  
hands."

- Josh Alan Friedman, author of Black Cracker

"Pilleater is one of the more vital and  
interesting voice of the alt right and new  
counter culture. He has cross platform  
talents from pod casting to video blogging  
and his new book form literary endeavors are  
well worth your time to take a look at."

- Richard Wolstencroft

"Where I can support Asian-Aryanism fully  
and unequivocally, however, is in viewing  
Asians and white as having largely emerged  
under the same hyper-social evolutionary  
pressures, and to therefore see the problems  
facing whites as problems which already - and  
even more so in the future - are felt by  
Asians." - HAarlem VENison

# Ludism: Board Games That Will Get You High

by  
Francis Nally

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Philadelphia, PA USA

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For Howard M. Fesler,  
the wizard at  
The Compleat Strategist

1960-2018

## INTRODUCTION

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Francis Nally

Ludism

I don't like board game culture. It's full of "queers" and anti-social nerds. It's ripe with a kind of behavior that is decadent and incompatible with high IQ people. Yet I been attracted to the scene since I was 15.

I guess I grew up. I don't go out and play board games with strangers anymore. In fact, "normies" ruined the entire scene with the whole "tabletop" ideology. The esoteric or "groggnard" board gamers meet on an irregular day of the week. Cool people don't rely playing in the store, unless it's someones house. Modern board game stores capitalize off of "socializing." Asmodee monopolized the entire industry. They only care about exploiting stupid people. And that's what exactly the entire so-called "tabletop" scene is about. Stupid people being exploited by capitalism.

And yet, I find the scene eccentric.

I met most of my girlfriends at board game night. There is a deep, intellectual level with games that builds relationships. Richard Garfield, Wolfgang Kramer and Chris Crawford perfectly examine, analyze, and critique the culture of playing. The work of "game studies" is kind of a pseudo-academic



discipline. There is a type of analytic philosophy called "Ludology." It is a very interesting discipline which influences my own thinking.

I included a bibliography at the end of this book. I no longer see Ludology as just another academic discipline. It's now religious.

I have converted to **Ludism**.

Ludism is a religion that promotes "ludic synergy." It was lead by founder Ron Hale-Evans. "Ludology," according to Hale-Evans, "is a term that encompasses not only the academic discipline of game theory, which focuses on strategy, but also game design, game variants, the study of mutators and operators, and so on."<sup>1</sup> "Ludology" is a mix bag for Hale-Evans. So I assume he is actually talking about "Ludism." Ludology is the study of game design and mechanics. Ludism is a religion based around a particular genre of board games. These are "positive and salvific life games" know as "GBGs," or "Glass Bead Games." According to Hale-Evans,

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ludism.org/ludology-links.html>

"A GBG is an 'artgame' inspired by Hermann Hesse's novel The Glass Bead Game. GBGs attempt to unite science, art, philosophy, mathematics, and spirituality into a single grand synthesis. They play with the contents of our global culture in the same way that a painter uses paints."<sup>2</sup>

Ludism strives to nurture and promote GBGs. GBGs promote "ludic synergy" which all games can create. Eventually, Ludism foresees the ultimate endgame (literally) of one game that humanity will play. There are basic games we as humans play and enjoy, but they are merely stepping stones to the ultimate GBG we will eventually discover. GBGs have one characteristic of being "mutators." Mutators, (or operators or modules)

"are rules that you can apply to just about any game to transform it into a game variant. Consider the misère mutator: in misère chess, the loser is actually the winner, and the same holds for misère backgammon, misère checkers, misère Cosmic Encounter, and so forth. The mediocrity mutator states that the

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<sup>2</sup> <http://web.archive.org/web/20030124101914/http://www.ludism.org>

winner is the player with the most middling score. Other mutators allow for handicaps in the game, or extra players.”<sup>3</sup>

This book is about ludic board games, otherwise know as GBGs.

I have tried to escape my passion for board games. I understand now there is a difference between consumer culture and passion. You may collect vinyl records because “you love music.” However, you could also listen to the same music for free online. Buying records will not make you a better musician. The same can be said about game design. The possession of board games does not make you a better game designer. This is an issue with people who are passionate about games. Games are sold as products to be consumed and thrown away. Where is the spirituality in that?

Reiner Knizia has created over 600 board games. I doubt that he keeps every single game he has made in his house. If he does, he has at least 800 games in his collection (that 200 extra is a guess). I never met anyone who has 800 plus board games in a single

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ludism.org/ludology-links.html>

house. If there is 365 days in a year, obviously, Knizia could play a new game everyday for more than two years. But he's too busy spending time designing games for profit. Knizia does not have enough time to leisurely play games in his collection. So what's the point of owning that many games?

Richard Garfield on BoardGameGeek.com, "owns" more than 500 games, close to 600. Garfield, who still plays games every other day, has to balance his work schedule with his play schedule. Garfield, as being a guru of games, has only published around 50 plus games.

The largest video game collection ever own was around 11,000 games.<sup>4</sup> The man sold his collection for around \$750,000. He was running a business and collecting games as a habit. A simple person cannot invest his time in all of those games at once.

People who believe that the possession of many games somehow equates to intellectualism are idiots. Raph Koster, who argues games will replace books, is a fool. His hoarding collection of games

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<sup>4</sup> Michael Thomasson in 2014.

is meant to show his social status and his pretentiousness. This man never published a board game and assumes learning everything about a subject automatically means one is an expert in that field. Meanwhile, Koster is advocating cyber Communism and cuckolded feminism.<sup>5</sup> This is only a reflection of a weak man who revolves his life around consumer culture. I'm surprised no one has ever called these people out as dim hoarders.

A business fraud by the name of Karl Deckard claims to have over 2000 board games.<sup>6</sup> A YouTube video showcasing a collection of 600 board games goes viral. But 2000? Deckard is lying.

Board game culture is obsessed with consumption and constantly models their playing rooms like the board game stores they buy stuff from. The games they buy are meant to be consumed, put on a shelf, forgot about, and then the process repeats. It's the perfect mind killer. Nothing is learned from this behavior. It's sad that these same consumers attend game conventions, sit in lecture halls about

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<sup>5</sup> Koster's speech "History of Virtual Worlds" presented at the GDC 2016 Flash Backward conference.

<sup>6</sup> Cited in Family Games: The 100 Best

designing games, and none of these consumers ever publish a game. It's like an endless echo chamber of "play more games to understand game design and philosophy," which is false.

Lewis Pulsipher said that people use to have "favorite" games. This truth radically changed in the past decade because of the normie infiltration of the market, the rise of the adult-baby lifestyle, and the inflation of board games made for them. People feel there is an endless sea of games and that the next big game is waiting to be discovered. The problem is that every possible "game" has been made. All the popular and "new" games have regurgitated mechanics and showcase bad art. New games target a certain type of normative person that likes a certain style of play. They think of Euros while pretending to be "hardcore gamers." Often they will say they are "really into games," and it turns out they only play Dead of Winter, Mice and Mystics, Cards Against Humanity and The Settlers of Catan (which are all mediocre games made for a consumer market). People use to have "favorites" where they played only one game. But this "discrimination" now means you are some kind of insensitive bigot or racist against safe spaces. There are also some so-called board game stores that advocate an

egalitarian mode of thinking where "we all want to play the same game." And again, these games seem to be Splendor, Azul, Castle of Burgundy, and other fad games based on gender-neutral economics. These stores often sell other products, like food or Magic: The Gathering cards, and attract the worse type of "queers" ever. I disassociate with this scene completely. Don't ever give the manager your money. He will run out of it soon and then he will prey on someone else.

Most cool people into board games are above the age of 50. Young kids don't care about board games. They want to play Super Smash Bros and have an Asian girlfriend. A millennial like me playing board games is a rare thing. I felt like I could just abandon the hobby and move on to cooler and intellectual pursuits. Yet here I am, writing a book about one of my favorite things in the world... board games.

Those who argue that they like "all games" are liars. LeBron James playing basketball is not the same as Bobby Fischer playing Chess. The fraudulent "tabletop" definition is an attempt to make all board games "intersectional." I use to play all my board games on the floor. So how can they be

"tabletop" if I play on the floor? This poor definition also includes war games, card games, dexterity games, and everything else which "tabletop gamers" could all enjoy. The truth is that wargamers don't get card games, card gamers don't get Euro games, and Euro gamers don't understand why people play Monopoly on a competitive level for \$10,000.<sup>7</sup> The "tabletop" myth comes from the prevailing ethos of the modern world, egalitarianism.

People are NOT the same.

To assume "everyone wants the same thing" is the creeping nature of exploitative capitalism. They don't care about your passions. They just want your money. And finally, there are those same game hipsters (normies) that only play Euro games because "that's the progressive way forward for game design." This is just market discrimination. They will just keep making up games for those types of people until they change their mind or all die.

Those who have an actual passion for board games and game design are more lonelier than you think.

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<sup>7</sup> Watch The Monopoly documentary "Under The Boardwalk" (2010).

No one wants to play Cosmic Encounter with me because nobody in Pennsylvania knows what it is. And the so-called "gamers" hate it because "it's random." This is the normie acting against the sensitive artist. Playing board games have always been reserved for an intellectual vanguard. Ludism separates itself from the masses. Video games are for the masses, board games are for the few. The few are less than 500,000. I am proud to be a stubborn elitist when it comes to games and game design. Ludism pursues The Glass Bead Game. These are games that are so-called "random" and in tune with the mutator.

I am not interested in designing games for the masses or for profit. That's not my job. I became a Ludist because I want to create ludic synergy and foresee the abolishment of work. That's why I am against the game industry. It's there to exploit the weak and is a regressive contribution towards society. Most of it is lying and saying a bunch of fancy words to make you sound professional and meaningful. In actuality, it's no different than being a professor in Women's studies. Those who want to make a living off games are evil. Not because they are genuine intellectuals, but because most professionals into games are like those who

work in the porn industry. How can you not be in it for the sex? A woman who becomes a porn actress is attracted to the culture it produces. No good people come from it. Not even the directors. Same with the drug dealers. The drug dealer seems to be always getting "high off his own supply." And this is a majority of people in the so-called game industry. Just look up "Gamergate" and deepfreeze.it. The advocates are trust fund babies looking for ways to make money. They do this by exploiting the poor while pretending to be one of them. Normies want to become the game journalist because "they like games too." The same goes for every white kid that wanted to learn Japanese to watch anime, read manga, go to Japan, and have Eurasian children.

Game design cannot be taught to the normie because it is ultimately an eccentric discipline. Game design is not about "being passionate" about games. It's an underrated art form that needs more attention. Only Ludism can help us understand game design as an art and religion. Normies think game design means "graphic design," or some type of production involving the creation of the game. If you create music for the game, are you a "game designer?" Game design is a branch of Ludology.

Ludism breaks from Ludology and becomes direct action.

The games listed in this book are the official games of Ludism. These games recreate the psychedelic experiences found in drugs. Over a decade of game playing, I didn't realize any of these games had a place in Ludism. If I was to go to an abandoned island and only take a few board games with me, I would refer to this book. A true person into board games should only have a physical collection of around 200. Most normies feel tempted to reach the 500 marker, but this is the max capacity for room and space. In fact, I only keep less than 100 games in a small room. I am fine with that number. If there is around 50 weeks in a year, I should have around 50 games. That is, a new game is played per week. However, a great game, like Cosmic Encounter, deserves to be played for months or for years. Professional "mind olympians" pick one game and master it. This is healthy behavior and should be the standard for everyone who plays games. People who swipe girls on Tinder will never find the right one. The same goes with the doomgaming consumer culture within board games. People who constantly play a new game every day are equivalent to those looking for "hook-ups" on Tinder. When men grow

older, they prefer to pick one game and settle with it.

It becomes clear that games like Chess, Go, and even Abalone have a special, infinite place with people. Ludism believes we are heading towards one game, and that game is The Glass Bead Game. This is the ultimate, infinite game people will play in the future. As a Ludist, I respect people who have a single game that they prefer to play. My GBG is Cosmic Encounter. All games in this book relate to The Glass Bead Game in some way. I can imagine anyone picking one game from this book and playing it for the rest of their life. Ludic games are different from normal games because of their mutative nature and the ludic synergy the game produces. Ludism came from a generation raised on rule-bending and roleplaying, which gave birth to the modern board game industry. A true ludic game resonates ludic synergy, gives players a deep feeling of ecstasy, and shows the player a new reality in which to create art in. The player becomes the artist.

A dull and mindless player sees the game as a system to express his strategy and thus "win" the game. There is more than just the state of "winning" for

the Ludist. The Ludist feels the high of winning every time he makes a "correct" and rewarding move in the game. This is ironically, a false, biological sense of accomplishment. It may be traumatic that the Ludist might make a mistake and lose the entire game, but winning is not the focus for him either. Winning is unattainable. Winning is the sin of normative behavior. It is the obsession of the rat race and the promotion of cultural capitalism. I don't play games to win. I play games to experience an ecstasy, which the feeling is similar to seeing a new world under the influence of LSD.

When I play a new board game, I focus on this "high" aspect. At one point in time, I thought the Euro game Walnut Grove was cool because it was the first "worker placement" game I ever played. Until I realize it was JASE (Just Another Soulless Eurogame). I now lost all interest in Walnut Grove. The game cannot reignite the feeling of the marijuana smog I felt when playing the game for the first time. Games like that cannot obtain the infinite ludic state, and therefor not on the list.

There are other normie games that I like, like The Settlers of Catan, that have tiny aspects of Ludism. However, Catan is boring and the only thing I like

from the game is trading resources, which is a tiny mechanic of the game and not the whole. I can't see myself smoking weed and being in a room full of other "queers" getting high of the mechanics of Catan. Only the trading mechanic and rolling dice gives that feeling of ludic synergy, but it's only a small part of the game.

This book represents the ultimate list of ludic games. I don't think there will new games past 2019 added onto this list. Everything has been done in the past few decades, and board game culture is a slow, sinking ship. The culture will become clandestine again (a good thing) and new games will come out of market fads influenced by our decadent culture.

Also to mention, there are a lot of gimmick games on this list. These gimmick games should not constitute the future of game design. To design a gimmick game, all one has to do is get a cool concept, object, activity, or old game and mix it with with another game. Hence, you might get games like Pretense which is a game about "game night." Or even Button Men which is a game about wearing actual buttons at a convention hall and making a game out of finding other strangers with buttons.

Magic: The Gathering is a gimmick game where Richard Garfield tried to make a game out of boring trading cards that had no purpose. And then there is Pieces of Eight that makes a gimmick out of coins! As you can see, the gimmick game is extremely pretentious, yet is a popular pattern in the game design world. But some gimmicks promote ludic synergy, which is good. Most modern gimmicks are bad, but the gimmicks that reach a higher state of consciousness is good.

If there are new ludic games pass the year 2019, or some in the past I forgot about, I will add them in a future edition of this book. However, as noted earlier, there is a limit to the number of games people can play. I don't want to advocate consumer culture. I added a checkbox after each game title for the reader to check-off if played or understood. This book is for education purposes only.

Again, I don't think it's possible to have over 2000 "favorite games." I personally don't have every single game listed in this book, but I have at least played each game once. My entire board game collection fits in a small space in my room. I am against hoarding and I despise anyone that collects Euro games like books. The end result would be

half-a-million dollars wasted on once-played JASE games and a room that emulates the game store the consumer worships. For an academic, books are small and can easily be stored on the shelf and referenced back for MLA or Chicago style sourcing. Board games cannot be sourced, they take up space, and play is only initiated with other people (but the manuals can be sourced). The sad victims that are forced to play these games always happen to be the family, wife, or complete strangers. Raph Koster is foolish to ever assume board games would take the place of Shakespeare. People have favorites, and having one game is the ultimate mind expander, not hooking-up with soulless Eurogames.

Some have said that games are an escape into a different reality. I do not advocate escapism or virtual reality. People assume game design means advocating a second reality. There are limits to a game and the concept of playing. Most people don't like to play games, and therefor, cocky gamers shouldn't force games upon them. Games are for both elitist and children. It's how we play. But it should not define the universe. A Ludist, once committed, believes the game is an art form waiting to be discovered. The game rewards the player with ecstasies similar to LSD, the high of risky



adventures, and the feeling of sex. This reward system should not be compared with life, as some say "the game of life." This leads into a second reality. I believe players should be smart enough to enter the magic circle, fully conscious that they are entering a game. The game is not real life, as there is always a feeling of safety on platforms like Discord, the internet, and playing a game with family and friends. No one in their right mind would go out and shoot a police officer because they did it with safety in Grand Theft Auto. If life is a game, then people would cheat this so-called game and play a new one. People enter and leave games all the time. Suicide is leaving the game permanently (that is, if you consider life a game). How does this make sense? Because life is not a game. No one can enjoy the game of being a cashier. I say this because too many game advocates want life to be a game. Drug advocates often want the world to do dope with them. I don't want that to happen either.

The rules should never be the ultimate definition of a game either. Neither should "play" dictate what a game is and what is not. Play may be the opposite of work, but work will never be a game because work is not play. Work is a struggle, an internal fight

with oneself and production. Often we work to get things done. But under capitalism, we are forced to work because we have to. Ludism believes in the abolishment of work because it will create a new economy based upon play than forced labor. This is a controversial statement. There will always be advocates of work, like Prager U, who will go against the concept that "life is a game." They are philistines and anti-gamers. This is a shock to most normies, game advocates, and game industry mouthpieces. I reaffirm the anti-game statement because games are not everything, but they remain influential in the arts and culture. Games are just a small slice of the human condition and not the whole.

Realize that the fine artist think in terms of reactions than interactions. Interaction is the basis of game design. Reactions are the basis of art. Reaction requires an artist and an audience which learns from him. Interaction is a cyclic dialogue between the artist and the audience, where the audience can influence the art piece, and the artist becomes the game master. Interaction is not the whole of fine arts. Nor is it superior to reaction.

I reaffirm I am a harmless Ludist that advocates a gaming religion that seeks to create new art based around interactive, abstract, physical and non-physical games to see and feel new realities, ecstasies, and cultures. Ludism practices an esoteric, clandestine, and somewhat gnostic ritual that is isolated from the rest of the modern world. Gaming will never change the culture of humanity in my lifetime. If gaming will change humanity, one game will arise from all the other games and become the only game humanity will ever play. This is the Glass Bead Game. The games presented in this book are related to that one future Glass Bead Game and are stepping stones that will reach that nirvana.

Cosmic Encounter has characteristics of The Glass Bead Game, and therefor I advocate only playing this game. Each Ludist has a different GBG they prefer, but Cosmic Encounter is the most popular GBG under Ludism. Eventually with the progression of technology, culture, and games, we will find the true game that will connect humanity together. Some say this will be a video game taking place in virtual reality with VR goggles, or uses highly advance digital technology. This Glass Bead Game will be physical, whatever form it takes.

Ludism advocates self-discovery, and it's up to the individual to find his own meaning in life. This requires finding that personal GBG and abstaining from "favorites." This favorite game has to create ludic synergy, and thus be a stepping stone towards the creation of The Glass Bead Game. Until then, a board gamer should focus on the physical world, not the digital one.

To be a Ludist, one has to throw away the materialistic world of video games. Video games are fun, but ultimately Skinner boxes and solitaire puzzles which has influenced future game design and ignored our universal path towards The Glass Bead Game. Ludism can only be experienced through the physical realm (board games). People who pass out and die over extended hours of playing video games are a new type of drug addicts. These lost souls cannot self-actualize themselves. Video games should only be played in small amounts, like drinking Soda and eating unhealthy foods. If one is a movie goer, treat video-games like movies, as video-games are becoming a second reality than actual games. Treating video games like this is a normal, healthy behavior.

Realize, however, that Choose-you-own-adventures, gamebooks, movies-with-choices, and cartoons-with-reflex-actions, are second-person narratives. They contain little to no interaction. Interaction is the heart of all games. A games that has interaction never ends, and thus is true to The Glass Bead Game. Ludism focuses only on highly interactive games that are not just second-person narratives. Stories and narratives are byproducts of the interactive games and not the game itself. Fighting Fantasy gamebooks are second-person narratives, but create a certain ecstasy that is infinite, and thus a ludic game. Some gamebooks do feature characteristics of The Glass Bead Game.

Normies that advocate that games are "all about the story" do not belong in Ludism. This axiom has nothing to do with Ludism and rather an advocacy of the second-person narrative, which isn't a game. Chess has no story, and is loved by the world. The Narratologist has a poor understanding of the game, as they are invested in the reaction than the interaction. There are better mediums for storytellers than using games. If they are so concerned that the story must be a "game," then they might learn something from Ludism. Only then they

might see the light and realize that games are more than gimmicks.

Some may never see the importance of The Glass Bead Game, and that is okay. Ludism is an elitist, niche group that advocates a certain sub-culture of people in the board game scene that likes New Age religion, drugs, Asian and hippy culture, and postmodern art. A fat kid with pimples into Warhammer 40K will not see why it's necessary to become a Ludist. The conscious effort of Ludism is to advocate games like Cosmic Encounter, Talisman, Looney Pyramids, and try to makes games similar in design, both aesthetically and mechanically pleasing. These games will enlighten people.

The Euro virus is harming Ludism like Christianity upon Paganism. I write this book as a manual and educational tool to let the reader start a journey into Ludism. The games listed here should be played at least five times to make a personal verdict. This would take about four years of extensive play. One will earn a Bachelor's Degree in Ludism by playing all these games AND reading the books provided in Appendix I. This is not just a quick and dirty survey, but an intellectual and spiritual journey relying on self-improvement and

seeing the importance of The Glass Bead Game. These books should be read alongside playing the games listed here.

I understand some of the books might have a "consumer-idiocracy" feeling about them, in that they try to advocate a "feel-good" anti-intellectual and normative (and somewhat liberal) behavior about them. I despise books like these. However, there are a few books in Appendix I that are contaminated with this stupidity. Please ignore the pozzness. Sadly, they are the only books available in Ludology.

I am sick and tired of the materialistic hoarding going on in the board game scene. Like Buddah said, "let go of all earthy possessions." All is suffering. Personally, I am an elitist, and incompatible with normative thought and culture. Ludism is the way forward. I feel I need to advocate such a religion to promote better art.

This book was also written for the normie that constantly asks me "what kind of board games do you like?" I pass him this book.

No, I don't play Power Grid. I never want to play that game again.

Also, Christian T. Petersen is a fucking asshole.

-F.N.

March, 2019.

## 1. 10 Days in The USA (2003) ☐

This game is better than Ticket to Ride. Take Alan Moon's traveling salesman problem and a simplified version of it. This is actually a card game and the board of the United States is an illusion. Get 10 of your cards matching a start and end sequence before the other player does. Cards are made up of states, cars, and planes. Walking occurs if two states can be placed adjacent together, cars can go two extra states, and planes fly to another state of the same color. This game is regarded as an education tool for dumb kids who don't know the USA. But what makes this game stand out is the hypothetical contest of touring The United States. Rather, the game teaches player to plan actual road trips accordingly. There is also an African, Europe and Asia editions too. Connecting the dots and bragging about it is the name of the game. The game is actually a dream about discovering America. The gimmick is making a card game based around studying a map.

## 2. 221B Baker Street: The Master Detective Game (1975) ☐

The 2016 Hansen deluxe edition of the game includes dozens of mysteries which makes the game endless. Most normies play this game about 20 times, and that only scratches the surface. Right next to Monopoly, Baker Street innovated the concept that the Parcheesi board is not just a roll and move race to the finish. A Parcheesi board can also be a virtual town, where racing to point A, B, and C is a choice, not a necessity. The "investment" that rolling towards each place can actually be a punishment if the opponent finds the clues first. What was the point of going there? It's a race! The game becomes a witty deduction game, rolling and moving around a virtual town. Often I feel like I'm an actual detective trying to solve a mystery and the dice movement is only the limit of my actions. You could make the same game without the Parcheesi board. But roll and move games are quintessential to the ludic experience. This game, along with Monopoly, helped develop more advanced roll and move games like Talisman. Collect clues and fill in the story. You could do that forever.

### 3. 4000 A.D. (1972) □

I remember starring at this game's board and being lost in actual space. 4000 A.D. follows a series of games that use no dice that was popular during its time (Diplomacy). The side with the most ships wins. Just capture the opponent's planets. The hidden movement mechanic makes it a bluffing war game similar to Stratego. This is the game that got stuck between Risk and The Godfather Game. 4000 A.D. has this intergalactic radiation that is influenced from 1970s science fiction pulps. An amazing game that has open doors for diceless war games. Politics makes this game truly out of this world. This was a major stepping stone towards the "cosmic mechanic." A mechanic that promotes diceless attacks similar in Cosmic Encounter. Whats left is emotional choices. I feel like a space commander playing this game. The game has some level of telekinesis within it. Cosmic Encounter without aliens and combat cards. Fun plastic ships and bluffing on red and yellow planets. Outer space is blue. Great to play in an Atomic Age living room.

### 4. 4th Dimension (1979) □

TRS was once producing games for Ludism. This is a classic in their "family" line of games<sup>2</sup>. Like Chess, you must capture your opponents "timelord." You constantly "warp" from the board going outside the map and "beaming" back down. This abstract game tries to play like Star Wars fictional Dejarik game. The acrylic-mixed board gives off an inducing, hypnotizing vibe. The chair-like pieces try to emulate an ancient alien architecture. Personally, it reminds me of The Neverhood. It's one of those games that try to give the impression it was made in the future with floating cards and teleporters. If you play this game over checkers, you must be an alien. Like The Star Game, esoteric knowledge is hidden within this game. This game defines the Ludist aesthetic. It was cool in the early 80s to be a kid and show this to your parents. I guess they all grew up and took Terrace seriously. Also this game has a hidden H.P. Lovecraft vibe to it too. Nostalgic like Warlocks & Warriors. Ludism for normies.

## 5. 504 (2015) □

...As I said before, I don't like Power Grid, but I do like this game. Friedemann Friese makes typical Euro games with themes about the letter "F" and the color green. But 504 is an expectation to all of his designs. This game requires you to take three different "modules" from the nine available and create a unique objective for the game. 504 has a modular terrain hex board like The Settlers of Catan, paper money, cards, chits, and colored wooden tokens. Players rely on the gamebook to learn a new game every time they play. This includes a new map, new rules, and objectives. Whatever form this game takes, it's still an economic Euro game. You purchase "privileges," you spend action points, and count up victory points. Whoever wins their objective wins. A spontaneous board game like Tales of The Arabian Nights or Betrayal at House on the Hill. The most random Euro game ever!

## 6. Abalone (1987) □

A two-player french abstract game where players move balls against one another. The object of the game is to push six of the opponent's marbles off the hexagon board. There are 61 spaces with 14 marbles on opposing sides. On a move, a player can move the marbles forwards in a line or forward within a horizontal line. Marbles are pushed deliberately or by accident. A quick abstract game similar to Reversi or even Zertz. Abalone represents every thing good about French culture. ...Marbles.

## 7. Acquire (1964) ☐

Possibly, the first Euro game ever made. Sid Sackson's Acquire is about financial control mixed with Domino-style placement of buildings. The 1999 version is a killer, and is like ruling over a small New York City. Very diabolical. Like Monopoly, Acquire is about greed, investment, and capitalism. Shares can be either public or private. Private shares make the game more ludic. It simulates investment, which is unpredictable. The Euro gamer insists that all information should be public during a game and that chance and bluffing should be reduced. Acquire represents a golden era where serious economic games were still playful and abstract for a general audience. We all want to be Donald Trump when playing this game. The ludic must use chaos magick in the correct way so he will not succumb to the power of the Euro. Imagine the plastic buildings representing a tiny alien civilization. The more interaction, the better. Acquire teaches us free market economics.

## 8. Amoeba Wars (1981) ☐

This is a great hex war game. I prefer this game over the sham that is Twilight Imperium. The Erich von Däniken, or Ancient Astronaut motif is present. Players must capture the adjacent center areas before getting the capital. Chits are used to represent units. Players are referred to as "Space Lords." Power cards make the game more unpredictable. Its sister game is Wizards Quest, also by the same designer. Nexus Ops is a distant cousin. The Time Warp in the game is an obvious reference to The Warp in Cosmic Encounter. You can see all the mechanic connections. This game pioneered the abstract-conflict hex game. The amoebas are constantly in flux. Players must manage resource and learn to "let go." The virus spreads everywhere. Famous designer Alan Moon play-tested this game. I like the cover art and the board. All you do is buy units, roll for combat, and kill each other. The Doomsday Machine is pretty cool. Amoeba Wars is one of a kind.



## 9. Ancient Conquest (1975) ☐

The History of The World was influenced by Britannia, Diplomacy, and this rare game, Ancient Conquest. This chit-base war games teaches a somewhat accurate history of Egyptian conquest. Traditional historical war games have very low ludic synergy, but this game in particular is an expectation. It was the first of its kind. I never learned anything historical from this game, and Britannia does a better job with history. The game gives each player a unique power and victory condition. Dice is used in combat. The epic nature of the game, and the omission of rules and the interpretation of it, makes the game feel endless and personal. It's minimal and simple gameplay is addicting. Throw away the hardcore realism in favor of light interaction. This is the chit war game I would recommend. The game was one of the first to introduce the "sweep of history" mechanic. Also, the act of diplomacy is written in this game, and is not verbal. Players write questions and advice back and forth to each other. Again, the absurd rules makes the game very abstract and personal.

## 10. Apocalypæ / The Warlord (1974) ☐

The epic scale of this game is intense. The map is huge. The Games Workshop edition includes only half of the original board, making the game a little shorter. Previously, Warlord players would leave the state of the game when they quit and come back to it another day. The diceless combat of number guessing is surreal. Randomness is replace by bluffing and intuition. An opposing player makes a wager, trying to guess the number of troops. If guessed correctly, the opposing player wins. Games like The Warlord offers players political dialogue similar to Diplomacy. Players are often making crucial decisions and breaking allies. The Ludic synergy is centered around this free nature of choice. Nuclear bombs can go off and make things worse. Conflict never ends. This mutation nature is similar to Attax. The Warlord is a classic. I can imagine WWII being simulated around The Warlord.

## 11. **Aquarius** (1998) □

Aquarius is a ludic version of Dominoes. The player with the longest hair goes first (a tribute to the flower child tradition). Everyone has a goal they must accomplish. Action cards can trade, steal, and "zap" cards (like in Cosmic Encounter) by cancelling the cards position. Imagine if the rules of Dominoes were modular, and the rules, including the goals, could be changed any turn to cater to the player. Aquarius gives players the freedom to move domino pieces around without restrictions. The colorful images gives off peaceful vibes of a utopian future. Aquarius is even better with the special Dragon promo card. The natural esoteric nature of the game advocates Ludism. The cards promote ecstasies of a new world. This game challenges the player to look inward into his soul. Aquarius is a basic mutator. A new way to appreciate the art of Peter Max.

## 12. **Attack!** (2003) □

This game needs the expansion in order to be appreciated for its ludic synergy. The expansion includes a wide map that takes up extra space. The size of this game creates a mighty illusion of conquest. With up to six players (and possibly 8 if it ever happens), this game is the ultimate miniature war game. The rules are straightforward and similar to the design of Axis & Allies, but only better. This game competes with another variant game called Superpowers. Both these games are very similar, but offer an extreme alternative to Axis & Allies. War games with hundreds of plastic figures attempt to paralyze the player into "simulated" control of actual troops. The rules help the players get into combat. There is also money to spend and action cards to play. What matters is the "attack." A classic dicefest with no complications.

### 13. **Ataxx** (1988)

Originally a video game, this abstract game can be played on a Reversi set, and is actually better than Reversi. Each player has a color token which they may grow or jump. Growing takes a token and multiplies it onto a space adjacent to it. Jumping makes the token jump a few spaces ahead. The game is over once the entire board is "infected" and who ever has the most color tokens when. This game perfectly simulates a virus taking over. Many video games took the system and implement it as a mini-game. A popular variant Hexxagon, is played on a hex board. The name "Ataxx" comes from the arcade version of the game, and has since become the canon name (the game was originally called Infection). A simple game that believes in the Reversi mantra "easy to play, hard to master." This game has one characteristic that is featured in most ludic board games, area control. Everyone must play Attax over Tic-Tac-Toe.

### 14. **Australia** (2005)

The quintessential board game about the country of Australia. The absurdity of the board game makes it a classic. Worker placement games are often dull and mathematical in point value. This game is an Aussie economic fight for Australian territory. Drop and pick up rangers using plastic air planes. The simplistic action point system makes the game easy to pick up. If you ever wanted to role play as Steve Irwin, this is the game. Imagine playing this game on the back porch looking at the actual Australia. And the map is shape like Australia! Crikey!

## 15. Backpacks & Blisters (1993) □

This is another traveling game. The unique cloth-map included in the game makes it perfect for playing out in the woods or during a picnic. Before Ticket To Ride, there was this game. There is a unique excitement to this game regarding racing towards each objective. Game design back then was more experimental and personal, which is something a Ludist should strive towards. The game relies on "pressing your luck" to gain points. The atmospheric rules, like being sunny or raining, adds a level of realism. Backpack and Blisters is a training tool on how one would survive as a hobo hopping trains. Play wisely. The game is advance for having a few components. Wear the game map like a bandana!

## 16. Barbarian Kings (1980) □

An obscure chit war game that takes place on a single page continent. Back then, even complicated games were sold for less than \$5 in a magazine. The game also has been reissued in 2001. You have to choose abilities during set up. Similar to Cosmic Encounter, alliances make up an important part of the game. Phases in the game open up windows for each unique spell. Army pieces requires an upkeep cost. The maps is a hook with an island in the center. Add all this together, you have a sophisticated game with low-brow magic in-between it. Very similar to The Great Khan Game but without the cards. This chit war game is turned upside down with the uniqueness of individual powers and player manipulation. This is one of the first games that introduced the concept of "windows" and magic manipulation. The ludic synergy is hidden within the magic.

## 17. **Barbarian Prince** (1981) ☐

This is a classic fantasy solitaire game. It is actually a gamebook with a map. You make a move, look up an event, and roll some dice. Like *Tales of the Arabian Nights*, the game always paints a new fantasy novel whenever you start a new game. Some gamebooks, like Tolkien's *Quest* and *Fabled Lands*, took the map-based movement from *Barbarian Prince*. I'm surprised gamebooks don't incorporate maps anymore. This game is a protest against video games. A ludic can mediate on the mind-expanding nature of *Barbarian Prince*. It is all in the head. A hermit game for the isolated ludic. Each step on a terrain hex is a new event. Play this game by the beach. It's worth it.

## 18. **Basari** (1998) ☐

This game is all about barter. *Basari* is played in 3 rounds, and who ever has the highest score wins. Action cards are placed face down and revealed at the same time. Players carry out actions simultaneously. If the same actions are carried out by two players, battering happens. Like in *Catan*, being skilled in trading can benefit your play. In *Basari*, you need to be skilled in bartering. *Catan* has low interaction, while *Basari* has high interaction. The game always puts you in a position to trade and barter gems. What might be a good trade is later revealed to be a bad one. Players must always think ahead. The *Parcheesi* board is fun and unpredictable. Dice are rolled to reposition the player marker. Pawns can land on a new gem or victory point space. Scoring happens every time the pawn goes across its starting position. Players can waste more time bartering than carrying out other actions. A social game that teaches us about bartering economics. Also to mention, there is a 2014 edition that replaces the board with a set of cards. One of my personal favorite games ever.

## 19. Battletech CCG (1996) □

Richard Garfield designed a total of five "Deckmaster" trading card games. The fourth release, without the Deckmaster title, was Battletech. This game was meant to improve on the mechanics designed for both Magic: The Gathering and Vampire: The Eternal Struggle. Instead of keeping track of 20 points of life with dice or counters, life in Battletech was counted by the cards in the deck. Once a player's deck is depleted, he loses. Because of this flow, sometimes it is advantageous to discard cards from the deck to reach for a card that will help the player. Another card game similar to Battletech was The Harry Potter TCG. The point of discarding cards was to create a minimal setup during travel play. Battletech was the first CCG to introduce the "cards-only" component of play. The choice of attacking "under construction" cards and the deck instead of just the robots opened new levels of strategy. Battletech CCG was about to replace Magic, but sadly did not catch on. Battletech is a superior game. Games are won by strategy, not by the cards.

## 20. Bazaar (1967) □

Bazaar is a simple economic system that relies on a dice roll and trading to generate income. The color-coded gems can be traded to earn a new colored gem, or players may wait until they roll it. A new table is used in every game. Gems are transferred for more gems. Cards are bought for victory points. There is low interactivity in this game and is rather a race. If you think economic shortcuts is fun, Bazaar is that game. It's also fun to pretend you are a mystic Middle-Eastern, selling Ancient Alien Sumerian money towards one another. You might get mad at the other player who buys your card first.

## 21. Blood Bowl / Blitz Bowl (1986) ☐

A classic two-player Games Workshop game where players control literal “fantasy” football teams of Orcs, Dwarfs, Elves, and whatever. Players choose a race and customize the team to their liking. The map is 26 squares in length and 15 squares wide. The object of the game is exactly like American football, get the football across the field. Players move each unit of their team in strategic positions to block and throw the football across the map. Special dice are rolled to determine a push or knock out. Each unit has a unique ability, from magic to speed. For a quicker game, I recommend the portable Blitz Bowl version which includes a smaller board. Instead of playing Warhammer 40,000, playing Blood Bowl is an alternative to it. Blood Bowl, unlike Warhammer 40,000, has geospatial relations with the figures, providing a limited environment and easy-to-understand rules. Roleplaying games tend to be too free which creates chaos. Blood Bowl is a game system that creates freedom through limitation. A thematic dueling game between two armies playing football. Think HeroQuest meets Camelot.

## 22. Boarderlands / Gearworld (1982) ☐

This game tried to take Risk and twist it with an economic system of trading sources. The players win once they construct three strongholds on the map. With the additional expansions, players can build temples and libraries, making the game more political. Also one expansion includes the important islands that connect to the map. This is a war game without the war in it. The so-called “conflict” is economical, but still interactive. This game is not a Euro, but a bartering and trading system to conquer territories and build units and constructs. Like Risk, players will have certain territories on the map and stick with them. Phases are determine by the roll of the die. Randomness, abstract contracts, negotiations, trading and bartering all create ludic synergy. Also to mention the Sword and Sorcery theme that takes places before human civilization is a New-Age bonus. Get Boarderlands with the expansions, not Gearworld. This game was before The Settlers of Catan and invented the trading system used in Catan. Ludism in war games is like Boarderlands.

## 23. Boggle (1972) □

Boggle belongs to a series of games where the interaction is mental, or at least a reaction. Boggle requires players to stare at a series of mixed up letter cubes and hypothetically try to find words that are in the "picture." Like Ricochet Robots, the game does not move. The players pretend to move it. Like walking around The Guggenheim Museum, we react towards the art. Boggle is an art piece, and the best reacted viewer can make sense of the art piece. Boggle creates a modular, ever-flowing game of infinite possibilities translated and interpreted by the "players." The game does not interact with us, nor we interact with other players. We are sharing a shared "reacted" experience by looking at a piece of art (or reading a book in a book club) and then interacting with one another about it. The game advocates people before machines. However, keep in mind that reaction should never replace interaction in games. Interaction is the basis of all games. Boggle may have low interaction, but we are trying to make sense of the design by starring into the Boggle abyss.

## 24. Britannia (1986) □

Designer Lewis Pulsipher was possibly influenced by the game Ancient Conquest and Risk, and incorporated the design into his own game, Britannia. What makes Britannia stand out is its turn-changing player characters. History is played out as players constantly change roles and strategies. The combat system is simple like Risk. Nothing is ever secure in Britannia, as players must adopt to a game that is against them and out of their control. This game breathes life. Ludism advocates games that open up new ecstasies, realities, and self-awareness for the players. Britannia established "mutator" rules within a war game. Like Nightmare Chess, Britannia takes Risk and gives it a rule change every turn. Britannia is for the player that wants to "let go" of the materialistic world.



## 25. Bullwinkle and Rocky Role-playing Party Game (1988) ☐

Most roleplaying games are a set of rules without components and the game master must make use of what he has to create his own game. Bullwinkle and Rocky is a roleplaying game in a box, with spinners, cards, props, and hand puppets! Newer generations don't understand the significance of Jay Ward productions. The game sets players creating their own Jay Ward cartoon by playing with hand puppets, drawing cards, and flicking the spinner to determine the result of "yes" or "no." Roleplaying games are fun when there are strict guidelines, limited actions, but a sense of unlimited freedom within the game. Bullwinkle and Rocky restricts that sense of unhealthy freedom with components. Nerds and mentally ill people use Roleplaying games as a vehicle to socialize. Intelligent people understand the limits of the game and understand multiple benefits a game can produce. Bullwinkle and Rocky forces those social outcasts to play a game within a set universe with goals and objectives. The game gives us the power of freedom while limiting unhealthy actions like "having gay sex with Bullwinkle and Rocky." Roleplaying-games are not vehicles to have "fun" with, but an intelligent discourse about reality and experiences that challenges players. A true account of Ludism.

## 26. Button Men (1999) ☐

Designer James Ernest tried to make a game where wearing buttons at a convention hall could be a game. If you see another person donning a Button Men button, you could ask him for a game. This was to force socialization among a crowd who is anti-social. The game has been released in a newer edition and as well an "originals" edition. I recommend the originals edition. Button Men is about rolling dice. That's it. Who ever rolls better dice matches win. In Dungeons and Dragons, the game master constantly requires the players to undergo a "skill check." Button Men takes that over used mechanic in D&D and makes a game out of it. Imagine if you saw a stranger and decided to challenge him and he had "8" strength. Who will win in combat? Button Men takes virtual reality into reality and questions our physical reality with statistic numbers that judge us. Ludism tends to perceive reality like this. A game that takes a simple concept and creates ludic synergy from it.

## 27. Camelot / Chivalry (1930) ☐

A two-player abstract game by George S. Parker that takes Chess and Checkers and makes a new game out of it. The game takes place on an extended and longer board. Each player has 10 "men" and 4 "knights." They make alternate moves capturing units or landing on two of the castle spaces winning the game. Units are jumped over to be captured, like in checkers. The knight can both "canter" and capture units at the same time. A canter basically means jumping over units without capturing them. Draws can happen if there is only one piece left. This game is like playing a pawns-only Chess. It's a surprising elegant game with a nice twist. Parker took a bunch of board game pieces and put them together to make up a new game. Camelot is that baby. Ludic games are born from these same gimmicks. Take note.

## 28. Campaign (1971) ☐

A classic abstract game similar to Camelot but adds addition players and unit types. There are 6 areas, where 4 of the areas can be occupied by players. Anytime you capture a town, you get the towns card. The object of the game is to capture the opponent's capital or capture an X amount of towns. You can also make alliances during the game. Alliances cannot attack one another and they earn a shared victory. Alliances can be broken at any time. Players roll the dice to determine movement. Infantry can only move diagonally, Cavalry can move diagonally and vertically, and the General can move in any direction. Each units have an attack and defense statistic. Units adjacent to opposing units can capture them if their attack stats are higher than their defense stats. This is all done after the movement phase. Movement can be used in any order, like spending points. The only luck is determine by the amount of movement you can roll up to. The higher, the better. A classic euro-style war game. In the true "euro" sense that choice is what matters over random outcomes. The randomness is just a handicap or a mechanic of choice. A fascinating war game that needs more attention.

## 29. Candy Land (1948) □

The object of Candy Land is to get to the finish. You do this by drawing a card and moving your pawn to that color. Like Parcheesi, there is no interaction, and it is often questioned if Candy Land is a game or not. James Ernest believes Candy Land teaches children how to play fair. It is a social device to make the player believe he is doing something in order to win the game (which is never guaranteed). When the player wins, he has pride that he has done something in the game in order to win. Candy Land is the game experience without the game. Anyone can play it. When we play Chess, Cosmic Encounter, Euros, or any type of game, it is all an illusion. We go back to the heart of Candy Land, that is, the game without a game. Ludics imagine The Glass Bead Game being something like Candy Land, where the game is so natural, we don't question the nature of the game. Candy Land is a Buddhist message about nirvana and life itself. Stop forcing weak people to play sophisticated games. Let them play Candy Land and reflect upon life.

## 30. Canyon (1997) □

This is a card game where you have to predict exactly how many tricks you will take. The theme is that players are paddling close to a waterfall. Taking too much will lead you off of the game board and into the waterfall. The anxiety is centered around pushing-your-luck and making sure you do not fall off. The board is an illusion to this danger. Canyon is a simulation, and this simulation offers a ludic vision into the fear of death. Why do we fear it? We must overcome fear by replacing it with the game of Oh Hell. We simulate adventure with a card game. Don't bid too much, or you will end up dead. I recommend the Grand Canyon expansion with this game. I was seduced by the big-tit Native American girl on the white wind card. Another similar game is Niagara. Niagara adds in an action point system and a gimmicky waterfall board. Either way, waterfall games are about death. Death makes us plan for the future.

### 31. Cartagena (2000) ☐

Imagine a path that leads straight to a ship. Now try and get all six pirates onto that ship. The player who looks like a pirate goes first (irrelevant, but it gets in touch with your spirit animal). Cards move the pirates forward. But only by moving backwards can you draw a new card. I prefer playing this game with the cards hidden, adding amount of bluff and luck to the game. The modular board creates a new game every time while the cards limit your actions. This race game is elegant but deep at the same time. Jumping around the board creates a state of ecstasy. At the end, you get excited like a little kid. Cartagena is the Euro version of Candy Land. Think ahead while going backwards. A meditative experience.

### 32. Ca\$hflow (1996) ☐

A simulation or "dream" board game presented by Robert Kiyosaki. This is more like a tool used to describe the differences between "assets" and "liabilities." The object of the game is to "quit your day job and live off profit." This is done by going around a Parcheesi board and asking questions about economic stability. This is not really a traditional game, ...I think. It's a tool about saving money and accomplishing dreams under capitalism. This game should be played along side reading Rich Dad, Poor Dad with other players. Perhaps Ca\$hflow is a good game to discuss the philosophy of Kiyosaki. An odd philosophical game about what the capitalist economy is suppose to do.

### 33. Cave Troll (2002) □

This is actually an area control game, even though it has a Dungeon-crawl theme. Cave Troll is all about playing units and moving opposing units out of a room to get the most points. On a player's turn, they have four action points to spend. One action type is placing a unit on the cave entrance, and another type is moving a unit or using its ability. Each unit has a unique rule. For example, the cave troll scares all other units in the same room and moves them out. Different cards can do different things. Different rooms are worth different points. The winner is the player with the most points. Players rather have fun moving around little men in a cave and enjoy the ping-pong effect to be "king of the hill." It's like an organic ant farm. Ataxx with a Euro twist.

### 34. Chaos Marauders (1987) □

This is a modular version of the card game Up The Creek. Players attach goblin armies together, from left to right, and attack each other rolling a die. Cards each have different abilities that changed the games system. Before trading card games, people played this game. Placing down three armies was intense because there was hardly room for them. It also felt like the army was coming to life to attack the other army. The unpredictable nature of changing rules and "attacking" cards makes the game ludic. I recommended playing the first edition and not the second. The first edition had cards with no rules written on them and giant play mats. It's up to the players to remember what exactly the cards do. The gimmick is that Chaos Marauders is a mutator version of Up The Creek. The art by John Blanche is superb.

### 35. Condottiere (1995) ☐

This game is a cult classic. Actually a card game, the game is more like an ultimate tic-tac-toe board. The map is a picture of Italy. The victories of each territory must be adjacent to one another in order to win the game. The card combat is similar to Cosmic Encounter, that the highest number wins the territory. A "Take That" back and forth combat. The discard pile is visible to everyone and players may look through it. The game is exciting because of the bluffing. Nobody knows which cards they are going to play. Playing the right card at the right time is the strategy. Sometimes, a player might want to lose a battle in order to save important cards. It boils down to a bunch of mini games of card zapping. Also, the favor token in an area bans combat, and can change throughout the game with the bishop card. Things can get political very quick. Alliances and leader-bashing will happen a lot. Let the cards determine your faith. Throw them out when you want to win, save the best for later.

### 36. Conquest (1974) ☐

Note, this is NOT "Ancient" Conquest. Just "Conquest." Another diceless war game, players must capture their "quest locations." The game is similar to Chess and Feudal in design. You could argue that it is actually an abstract game and the theme makes you believe it is a war game. There is a variant called "Quest Chest" which plays Conquest as Chess. Some people argue that Chess has a theme, that it tells a story about a war. Conquest, similar to Chess, acts and plays more like a story. Abstract games don't have much of a story, and players must implement an esoteric meaning behind the game (like playing a mystical contraption in the video game Myst). An abstract game can be transformed (supposedly) into a war game by implying a "war" theme. Normies can't see the difference. A ludic sees all games as being non-psychical abstract machines. Conquest is a game about movement positions and capturing. The game is, as stated on the box, that is "easy to learn and more fun than Chess."

### 37. Conquest of The Empire (1984) ☐

A war game in the Gamemaster series by Milton Bradley. The game was designed by Larry Harris, who also designed Axis and Allies. The board shows Europe, Egypt, and the tip of Africa. Each player begins with a Fortified City, a Caesar figure, four Generals, five Infantry, and then selects a home providence other than first player's Macedonia. The object of the game is to eliminate every other player. Control markers are left on providences once they are seized. Different providences rewards players with different amounts of tributes (money). Leaders can move, but can't fight. Combat figures can fight, but can't move. If you lose your Caesar figure, you lose the game. Phases follow the order of movement, combat, collect tribute, destroy cities, purchase new units, and place new units. Dice are causally rolled in combat. Players keep doing this until they kill everything. A game about creating a civilization like Rome. For war game maniacs.

### 38. Cosmic Encounter (1977) ☐

The board game that defines Ludism. This game is similar to the actual Glass Bead Game. Therefore, all future ludic board games should emulate Cosmic Encounter. Many old school D&D players and science-fiction readers played Cosmic Encounter. Richard Garfield took inspiration from this game and tried to implement it in his designs. Cosmic Encounter has been through many editions, but every ludic should own every edition and expansion. The game is known for its alien powers, which players must role play into character in order to win the game. The game situations are always different, and players must adopt to the environment. Politics, alliances, and shared wins is all possible. Combat cards are dealt facedown and revealed at the same time. Allies can play cards once the opposing cards are played first. Special cards and alien powers can change the game drastically. Opponents are determine randomly every turn, forcing opposition on allies. See Appendix B for "The Future Pastimes Manifesto." which correlates to Glass Bead Game design. All these points relate to all games in this book. Ludism is the path of enlightenment, and Cosmic Encounter shows us the way forward.

### 39. Cosmic Wimpout (1976) ☐

Legend has it that the game was made up by a hippy commune out in a forest. There is a real cult behind this game that hides from the modern world. Jerry Garcia of The Grateful Dead is said to have dealt drugs while playing this game. Cosmic Wimpout is a dice game with an unorthodox set of dice. The dice features cosmic symbols with relations to man and his place in the universe. The objet of the game is to roll dice and try to get the highest points. Pressing ones luck might result in a "cosmic wimpout." The game is played on a piece of cloth, similar to Backpacks & Blisters. This same cloth can be wore as a bandana. You may also use Ice Pyramids or stones to us as score trackers. Ideally, play this game while train hopping or backstage. Rolling the dice determines your faith. Enjoy the leisure of self-discovery. A game out of this world.

### 40. Cthulhu 500 (2004) ☐

A racing game using cards. The flag card is shuffled in a deck, and once drawn, the race is over. Players draw five cards. On each turn, you can play an action card, try to pass a car, add pit crew, or make a pit stop. To pass a car, you must roll a die. There is also reaction cards played against other players. After the action phase, players discard any cards they don't want and draw up to two cards back into their hands. This game is a wacky version of Mille Bornes with an attack die. The game can end at anytime with the flag card appearing, similar to what happens in The Great Khan Game. A "Take That" racing game. For both Lovecraft and Nascar fans.



## 41. Cube Farm (2002) ☐

The theme of the game is based on the mundane life of corporate work. Place tiles closest to the “good things,” while avoiding the bad things. Play cards to claim a cubicle. The highest score wins. Cube Farm is straightforward. Actions are either this or that. Other similar games include Nexus, The Very Clever Pipe Game, Waterworks, and Tom Jolly's Knots. What makes Cube Farm stand out from the other tile-connecting games is its nihilistic theme of work. Ernest is known for making simple games with outlandish themes. You can sense the ludic synergy. Cube Farm is funny variant that plays out the life of the dependent NPC. Simple rules get across the message. Like the Landlord's Game or The Big Cheese, these games teaches us an alternative system from capitalism. Cube Farm teaches us how to sneak away in the corporate environment that hates us. Work should be abolished.

## 42. Curse of the Mummy's Tome (1988) ☐

A 3D Parcheesi game where players reach the top of the pyramid. Each player starts with 5 cards, 6 money cards, and a character sheet with statistics. The mummy can be moved by the bid of other players. The player may then move, exchange cards (like in Catan), or heal oneself for one point for 10 money cards. To move, a player moves a direction card, like in RoboRally, and moves that direction. However, other players can add on to that direction, falling the player into a trap or fall off the map. If the player falls on an encounter space, opponents may play monster or trap cards on him. Encounters are resolved by rolling a d12 and comparing it to the stats. The player wins the game once he reaches the top and passes one final test. This game is like RoboRally, Parcheesi, and Fireball Island mixed together into one. A lost gem of the 1980s.

### 43. Cuttle (1975) □

The designer of the game claims he “learned the rules” to the local game in 1975. The game is played with a standard deck of playing cards. The object of the game is to get 21 points worth of playing cards. The cards may either be played for its point value, or activate its special power. For example, The 8-card looks at the player's hand, The 3-card gets a card from a discard pile, The 5-card draws another card, and so forth. The player may also discard an active card by matching the same number on his discarding card. Cuttle is a race to get 21 points. The designer claims that it is similar to Magic: The Gathering and possibly predates it. Otherwise, the designer is lying. Even if he is, the designer has realized that he can turn a deck of playing cards into The Glass Bead Game. The rules might as well change every time someone plays Cuttle. Only memory can make the game work. What we can do with a standard deck of playing cards is amazing. A rule might as well state to say "cuttle" ten times fast when you play a 10-card. Card games will always represent the mutator model. Cuttle was the birth of Ludism.

### 44. Darkover (1979) □

A classic game of Ludism. This game mixes area control with truth or dare, charades, staring contests, and other goofy things. Every player must write down a special new rule to change the game. Everyone must vote on the new rule, similar to Democracy. This game offers player powers once they control a tower. The “monitor” player has to watch other players from being mad, greedy, or upset, and forces a player to discard a token if they ever show those feelings. That player becomes the new monitor. Ironically, the rulebook makes fun of the rules. The game master must determine what is a sincere rule and what is a ludic one. Darkover has levels of Ludism beyond imaginable. I highly recommended this game. It's a war game about winning a bunch of mini games. Every aspect of Darkover is a challenge and creates a new experience. A real experiment about how humans play.

45. DeathMaze / Citadel of Blood (1979) ☐

Unlike having a choice in a gamebook, DeathMaze is random. Chits are randomly drawn and events happen out of nowhere. It is like the video game Wario Ware Inc, where event after event surrounds you. A more detailed version of DeathMaze, with bigger tiles than chits, is DungeonQuest. DeathMaze is modular and may be extended upon using rules from other roleplaying games. It may require a sophisticated game master. DeathMaze always delivers something new. Rolling a d6 is constantly required, unlike DungeonQuest where cards are drawn. A true game system where mechanics can be taken apart and remade into something new. It was was one of the first random "dungeon crawl" systems ever. The ecstasy of getting into random situations is ludic. It's a risk to survive in DeathMaze.

46. Democrazy (2000) ☐

The only mechanic in this game is democracy. A player draws a card, proposes a vote, and continues until the end card is drawn. Whoever has the highest score, or a rule that says so, wins. A lot can happen with a simple vote. If everyone decides to pass "all players lose the yellow chips" which the yellow chips are worth three points, obviously, that's not a good vote. The nature of democracy is revealed. It's not a good thing, but a chaotic, quite nepotistic, and backstabbing rule of law. Always compromise, but cheat when something benefits you. Sedate the voter, and let them vote for the supposedly neutral rules. There is no rulebook. You are letting the players vote for their own rules. Maybe there will be a shared victory, or that everyone accidentally loses. Be careful what rules you vote for. This is a Ludist exercise in playing with rules. There is no such things as rules. There is only people that enforce them.

#### 47. Detroit-Cleveland Grand Prix / Top Race / Downforce (1996) ☐

The original racing game. Normies like Formula D because it's a "complex" racing game. They ignore Wolfgang Kramer's editions because it doesn't have "skill." His racing games serves as the origins of all Euro games. Ironically, his racing games are rather abstract bidding games. Choices are made through playing cards. Everything is exact. This game is a strategic Parcheesi with a mix of betting. The game's betting mechanic is similar to what is found in Heimlich & Co. Imagine being a spectator as you watch unpredictable cars racing in front of you. The game has a life of its own, even when you think you are making rational choices. If you want to play an advance Parcheesi, this is it. This a simulation of cars racing in your room.

#### 48. Diplomacy (1959) ☐

This is the ultimate game of politics. All play is dealt through negotiations. Everything else is simultaneously. No two pieces can ever be in the same territory. Players must control an X amount of supply centers to win the game. After all moves happen, players have a second change to negotiate and use their diplomacy. After the "Fall" phase, new units are added and supply centers are scored. The game ping-pongs back and forth until there is a winner. Diplomacy has a dedicated following and often they treat the game like Chess. Once you play Diplomacy, there is no other better game about politics. You can incorporate the skills you learned in Diplomacy through Cosmic Encounter. Diplomacy is an exercise in abstract politics. This is the key in order to understand the complex nature of The Glass Bead Game. All Ludics love Diplomacy. Meditate on it and play.

#### 49. Discworld: Ankh-Morpork / Nanty Narking (2011) □

Martin Wallace, who usually does train games, made a wonderful area control game mixed with humorous fantasy. I never read Discworld, but the concept of living on a giant turtle is pretty cool. Everyone has a secret goal, which everyone tries to accomplish. You have a five-card hand, which every turn you play and draw a card. Players vie for control for the areas relying on the cards. Each card is unique and does something different (There are over 100 unique cards). The interactions are unpredictable, making the game exciting. Discworld mixes bluffing, deduction, and modular rules into one area control game. The simple card playing and mutator mechanic makes the game an instant classic for Ludics. Anything can happen in a small 12-area space. A ludic exercise where a set of unique cards determine the rules and outcome.

#### 50. Diskwars (1999) □

A "war game" that use discs as infantry. Discs are measured with a ruling stick, and flipped multiple times till it stops or lands on the enemy disc. Discs are remove from the game till one army stands. The game can be played anywhere. The fact that the game has no board makes the game feel open-ended. Playing outside is a surreal experience. Also the ability to customize an army can feel very personal, but sadly is a gimmick. Diskwars provides an alternative to miniature war games. Diskwars focuses on playing the game than painting models (Ludology and painting are two different disciplines). Miniature wargaming is a niche hobby, and traditional board games outnumber miniature war gamers. Diskwars is a compromise between both parties. We can make up advance and sophisticated war games by using household items. We apply the meaning through the things we play with. Another game that is similar but uses coins instead is Pieces of Eight. War games like Diskwars and Pieces of Eight never took off, but remain as an experiment in Ludism.

## 51. Doom: The Board Game / Descent ☐

When I was 15, I bought Doom: The Board Game out of curiosity. I was surprised that a board game made an attempt to recreate the video game. Fantasy Flight at the time was making video-to-board game conversions. The company is now a shell of a company that now sells Star Wars products and is own by a larger European company called Asmodee. The golden days of Fantasy Flight are gone. Doom: The Board is everything what a proper game of Dungeons & Dragons should look like. Miniatures, corridors, tokens, a scenario book for the game master, player tableaus, experience points earned from every session, this game has everything. It can show a video gamer the joy of playing physical games over the virtual. Also there is Descent, which is a fantasy theme version of Doom. Avoid the new edition of both Descent and Doom. The older editions allow improvisation and rule interpretation. You could be an evil game master and go against the good guys. But you could also be a referee and enjoy watching them struggle. Its like a box full of toys and the game master has to make sense of it all. It lets us imagine a new piece of art in our heads. Doom: The Board Game is an introduction to the world of board games for video gamers.

## 52. Doomtown: Reloaded (2014) ☐

This has to be my favorite CCG ever right next to Netrunner. Doomtown mixes Poker, Magic: The Gathering, and area control into one game. The deck must be exactly 52 cards, plus two jokers. Spades are characters, Clubs are events, Diamonds are locations, and Hearts are attachments. During the first phase, an ante happens, and a poker hand is drawn to determine the active player. Often players will be looking through each others discard pile to use deck deduction and figure out what they have in their hand and overall deck. Every turn, a play does an action, or passes. If there is more control over the opponent's influence, you win the game. Poker is resolved during combat. Higher ranks do more "damage" than lower ranks. The game is really determine by one ultimate poker shadow. Most of the game is building up resources and cards, until the right moment players attack one another. What we think is skill is actually the draw of the cards. Doomtown uses average playing cards and gives them rules to create an advance poker competition for area control. Like Cosmic Encounter, every player starts out with a number of Diamond cards (think planets) that can be invaded by other players. Doomtown shows us The Glass Bead Game through a deck of playing cards.

### 53. Drakon (2001) ☐

A treasure raiding game where a dragon tries to kill you. On your turn, you either move or place a tile, extending the dungeon. Each room may cause a different effect. Collect 10 coins to escape the dungeon. No one knows how much each player has. Coins are kept facedown. Each player has a unique hero ability. Players may also move the dragon and harm their opponents. This game is better than that horrible propaganda known as Carcassonne. Normies hated Drakon because it was a ludic experiment in dungeon creation. Similar to Aquarius, the board, pieces, and score is always in flux. Drakon is a perfect mutator. In fact, the only tile-placing mutator game worth playing.

### 54. Dune: The Board Game / Rex (1979) ☐

This is the ultimate political game for Ludics. This game mixes Cosmic Encounter, Diplomacy, and Boarderlands all together. It is often revered as a classic gateway game to Ludism. Each player has a political character that is unique, and must secure an X amount of strongholds to win the game. Victory may be won in shared victories or by unique goals. The board is circular and similar to Discworld. Cards are auctioned off every turn. Combat is similar to Cosmic Encounter, that cards are placed face down and simultaneously revealed. So much is going on in a short amount of time that the game feels alive. Theme is the most important mechanic. Players step in the world of Dune and must struggle with the games system. The Rex edition tries to make the game more balanced, but ends up being a teaching tool for the original. Dune is a must have for the esoteric ludic that wants to experience the vision Alejandro Jodorowsky once had.

## 55. **Dungeon!** (1975) □

This game mixes Parcheesi and Dungeons and Dragons together. It has been said that this game predates D&D. Dungeon! features a level up system, a risk-your-luck creature fight, and is a treasure racing game. You could ignore the rules and use the map to implement your own D&D game. On your turn, you roll a die and move your pawn. If you enter a chamber, you fight a creature. You are rewarded with a treasure to level up, or you die during combat. Like Monopoly, Dungeon! took a Parcheesi board and added a new mechanic to it. Monopoly took the Parcheesi board and created a real-estate game. This fascination with the Parcheesi board has always created ludic games. Dungeon! envisions a dungeon to explore. Exploration opens the mind. Talisman later became the advance version of Dungeon! This game was apart of the birth of Ludism.

## 56. **DungeonQuest** (1985) □

Based on a Swedish board game, DungeonQuest is a classic modular board game. Dungeon tiles are randomly placed on the board that create a unique maze of its own. Players have to reach the center of the maze to steal the dragon's treasure. Everyone has to leave the maze in order to win the game. There is a game clock that is ticking, so they have to be quick. DungeonQuest improves on DeathMaze that it is a graphical game, unlike DeathMaze which requires pencil and paper. The exploration aspect is very modular, and no maze is ever alike. Sometimes, players will be in danger by the fifth turn and should leave the maze in order to win by survival. There is little interaction in the game and can be played solitaire. However, players do play their opponent's enemy creatures during combat, making it the only form of interaction. DungeonQuest tells a story of a treasure hunter. And often, most players lose. This ever-changing game is fantastic.



## 57. Dungeon Twister (2004) ☐

This is a unique dungeon game with twisting tiles. This is a two-player game, but requires an expansion to make it four players. The tile maps are randomly place face down, something like in Wiz-War. The object of the game is to get five victory points by killing characters or exiting the dungeons. Each player choose four characters to make up their team. Items are placed face down on the board as well. Actions are spent on moving, attacking, and flipping over the maze tile. There are also battle action and cards. Much of this game borrows elements of Wiz-War and G.O.O.T.U. and improves upon it. Unfortunately, there is no dice in this game. You can twist the maze tiles, hence "dungeon twister." A cool game that was big in the 2000s and then faded out. Classic fantasy Ludism.

## 58. Ebola Monkey Hunt (1998) ☐

An obscure pocket game about capturing monkeys back into the lab. Like Wiz-War, the board is made up by selecting random maze tiles. Each player gets three action cards. Movement is determine by a die roll. You may draw an action card when you roll a 1 or a 2. Monkeys also have unique abilities that either help or harm players. You may also attack other players to get their monkey. This is an outrageous combat game where players battle over aggressive monkeys. This game improves upon rolling and moving by adding in combat and interactive events. A funny and outlandish modular game that envisions an AIDS outbreak.

## 59. Eleusis (1956) ☐

A rule-changing card game by the great Robert Abbott. Eleusis can be played with a standard deck of playing cards. A player chooses a secret rule about the cards, and the other player must determine that rule using inductive logic. The player who made up the rule must say if the rule was correct or wrong. If the other player guesses the rule, they either win the game or get points if playing in rounds. This game is no different than Zendo or Lemma. In fact, the game Zendo is directly influenced from this game. You could play Eleusis with anything! Try it with French Tarot cards. A game system that converts the innocent into Ludism.

## 60. Elric (1977) ☐

Based on the Elric series, this is a fantasy war game similar to Barbarian Kings. The game uses dice to determine combat. The map is very colorful and looks like someone drew on it (think Middle Empire). The rulebook is vague and players must improvise with the system. Magic is apparent like in any other fantasy game. The winner is determined by the player who has the bigger army, or takes control of "Imrryr." Players are encouraged to make up their own scenarios (map configuration and rules within the game). This game feels like a roleplaying game mixed with a war game on a limited space. A lot can be made with this little engine. An imaginative fantasy toy-box. The artwork is amazing.

## 61. Enchanted Forest (1981) ☐

A children's board game based upon memory. Each tree has a symbol under it. The trees are randomly placed over the Parcheesi map. Each card has a symbol according to the tree. A card is flipped face up from the deck to show the symbol players are after. Roll dice to move, and choose to move one die or both dice shown. Pawns must move exactly up to the tree to look under it for the symbol. Once the symbol is found, they must race to the deck to reveal the tree. Players must score three cards to win the game. This is a memory game mixed with Parcheesi. The race towards the deck makes the game more exciting and risk-taking than just flipping memory cards. Sometimes, another play will beat you to the deck before you because of a dice roll. In a six player game, players can guess the correct tree quickly by assuming a player is racing towards the deck early. A classic game that improves upon the Parcheesi model.

## 62. Falling (1998) ☐

A real-time card game where it simulates cartoon characters falling to the ground. The dealer does not play the game, but moderates the game dealing cards to each player in a constant motion. Players may only take one card from the top of their stack and hold it in their hand. The only way to get rid of it is to play it. Anyone who gets a ground card is out of the game. A stop card may negate a ground card until it is dealt on the next turn. This game gets really anxious and exciting when players are about to reach the ground. Waiting too long for the desired card ends up in defeat. Simulating a fall awakens humanity's fear of death. Watch what players do to ignore it. It is somewhat more fun to be the dealer than the actual player. Real-time games are hard to come by. Falling is unique that it was created for the dealer.

**63. Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks (1982)** ☐

This series was an important development (if not, the creation) of the gamebook. Before Fighting Fantasy, there were Choose-your-open-adventure books, where players would make choices and flip to certain pages. Fighting Fantasy introduced sections that could fit on a single page, plus personal statistics and dice combat. Statistics include life, strength, and luck. Only a pair of dice, paper and pencil is needed to play. For combat, roll dice plus the added strength bonus. Whoever has the higher roll, 2 damage is deducted from their life stat. The player dies if their life stat reaches zero. Fighting Fantasy has over 50 published books. Naturally a solitaire pursuit, an added game master can turn the game into a roleplaying game. The future of the second person narrative was built for Fighting Fantasy. Soon, more books will take the Fighting Fantasy lead. A basic understanding of interaction is usually introduced by reading a Fighting Fantasy book.

**64. Fist of Dragonstones (2002)** ☐

Designer Bruno Faidutti was influenced by Cosmic Encounter when he created this game. Also, the glass beads in Fist of Dragonstones is spiritually connected to The Glass Bead Game. This game is a closed-auction game full of surprises. Players bid for special powers that will help them during future auctions. The fun part is clenching your fist and opening them on the cards you want. Whoever has the highest score wins. This is a straight up bidding game. Outwitting and bluffing is they way to win. One of the only modular bidding games, next to Tom Jolly's rare Villages. The cards make the game ludic. You are auctioning for rules that break the game in your favor. This is a wacky version of Sultan.

## 65. Fluxx (1997) ☐

Fluxx is a modular card game where the object of the game is to accomplish the goal. The card types include Keepers, Goals, Actions, and New Rules. The goal cards list a number keepers or rules the player must have or do in order to win the game. Other players can change the game accordingly by playing a new goal cards. New rule cards add new rules. Actions do things. Fluxx is like a limited version of 1000 blank cards with the rules already written on them. There are many different editions of Fluxx and new cards from different editions can be added to any set. Also, there are blank Fluxx cards, so feel free to write your own. A groovy card game that will replace all traditional card games. The card game that was made for Ludism.

## 66. Focus / Domination (1963) ☐

A two to four player game where you try to capture all opponent's pieces or stop them from moving. Players cannot move diagonally. Piece are stack on top of one another to create an extra level of strategy. Once a piece is up six pieces high, the bottom piece is removed. The game continues until all player cannot move but one player, who is the winner. A simple abstract game. Very akin to ancient alien technology. A Sid Sackson classic.

## 67. French Tarot Nouveau (1900) ☐

A traditional tarot deck is used for cat lady mind reading. French tarot is used for playing card games. Everything a traditional tarot deck has is in the French tarot, except numbers are used for the majors. An excuse card, like a joker, is included as well. The french tarot looks exactly like a deck of playing cards. This is good especially for game designers. To understand why the tarot deck is special, play a couple of games with the french tarot and you will understand. Many games have been created using a french tarot deck. You can use the majors, like the excuse, as "special" cards to create new rules. Creating games on French Tarot is similar to playing a game of Cuttle or using Piecepack. French Tarot should be preferred over traditional Tarot to learn how the system works. Once memorized, you can play any card games on a traditional tarot deck. Please refer to the book The Game of Tarot by Michael Dummett.

## 68. Frontier-6 (1980) ☐

A very rare cowboy-theme family game that introduced the player tableau. Richard Garfield reveres this game as a classic. Player roll and move around the board buying property and collecting money similar to Monopoly. Players may "hold up" the bank, and rob opponents of their money. In return, those players become "wanted." It is also advised to play an actual game of poker when any poker conditions are resolved, similar to Doomtowntown. This is a fun game about cowboy roleplaying.

## 69. Ghooost! / Skitgubbe (2013) ☐

Richard Garfield's Ghooost! is an attempt to create a modern variant of a Swedish card game called Skitgubbe. In Skitgubbe, one player is the loser and everyone else wins. Ghooost! works the same way that there is also one loser. The first phase is playing cards, something like in Crazy Eights. The next phase is getting rid of the cards, until there is one player left with cards who is deemed the loser. Winning has been accepted as a universal goal, while ironically, Ghooost! celebrates the loser. Imagine if there were more games like Skitgubbe. The psychology among players is changed drastically. It becomes "The Hot Potato" syndrome. An interesting system that interacts with players in a whole new way.

## 70. Ghost Chase (2001) ☐

A deduction and exploration game. One player is the ghost and must hide himself from the other players. Movement is tracked using cards. The ghost cannot enter the same room twice. If the players find the ghost, they win. The ghost wins if they can't find him. It's a unique hide and seek game in a fictional castle. Ghost Chase is more easier to play than Scotland Yards, and shares similarities with Battleship. The exciting part is acting like a ghost and fooling all the hunters. There is also a "cheating" card that gives the advantage of reentering the same room, and as well enter a secret passage. A very tricky game that lets the ludic read peoples minds. Hide and seek as a board game.

## 71. Give Me The Brain! / Lord of the Fries (1996) ☐

A game that argues that work is for zombies. Like Crazy Eights, players must empty their hands to win the game. Players play bid cards and try to claim the brain at the start of the game, or when the brain is "dropped." The brain lets them play complex job cards. The active player plays job cards and read what the card does. Another game in the series, Lord of the Fries, lets players craft fast food on a restaurant menu. Dice are rolled to find the order, and players make the order. These fast food games are chaotic and in the tradition of Grave Robbers From Outer Space and Bazaar. The playful Zombie theme is insightful about capitalist slavery. Give Me The Brains is a ludic alternative to Crazy Eights, and Lord of the Fries acts as a simple resource game. James Ernest is the master of elegant game design, and these games follow the Reversi mantra "easy to learn, hard to master."

## 72. G.O.O.T.M.U. (1992) ☐

"Get Out Of The Maze Unit" is a crazy maze game for up to six players. Like Wiz-War, maze tiles are placed randomly. Each player must collect three pieces of their color key to get out of the maze (or as a variant, also must exit the maze by touching their starting spots). Players roll and move. On a 6, a player may shift a maze tile in any direction. That's pretty much the game. Like Ricochet Robots, players must quickly analyze the maze and see the best and quickest direction out of the maze. It's a like the traveling salesman question in 10 Days in The USA. Anything in the maze can happen, like moving a monster to attack opponents or landing on a special rules space. A mutator game that creates a new maze every time. More games should be like this one.



### 73. Grave Robbers From Outer Space (2001) ☐

A "movie" card game that pokes fun at B-movies. Players must make a name for their movie and finish it. Words score extra points at the end of the game if they have them. Everyone draws from one main deck like in Killer Bunnies. Cards are thematically played like props in a movie. Like Redshirts, there is a "Take That" reaction for every card played. Cards are either played on one's own tableau or on an opponent. Once the player gets the "Roll The Credits" card, the game is over and points are added up. Whoever has the highest score wins. The game is also similar to Doomtownt: Reloaded that almost the same type of cards like characters, locations, attachments and event cards exist in Grave Robbers as well. A simple, straightforward combat card game that adds a lot of leader-bashing and card discarding. The game acts like an original Ed Wood script being processed. A creative writing exercise and a true mutator card-playing experience.

### 74. Groo: The Game (1997) ☐

A card game based on the famous comic series. Players compete to build a town by playing building cards. Dice are rolled to gain resources. Similar to Grave Robbers from Outer Space, cards are played back and forth until one player wins. Like Killer Bunnies, if an event card is drawn from the deck, it is immediately played. Also, the resource dice predates that of The Catan Dice Game. This game is a race to get a certain amount of building points. The "Take That" chaos makes it a wonderful game of unpredictable ecstasies. The expansion is required! This game is better than Magic: The Gathering.

## 75. Hanabi (2010) □

A unique, cooperative card game where players hold their cards backwards. All the players must match a series of numbers together from 1 to 5. Each suit has a different color, including wilds. A player can use a hint point to determine what he has in his hands. If confident, the player makes a guess. If a player's guess is wrong, the card is discarded and the "fireworks" start to detonate. After three detonations, the game is over. They count up their score and try next time to get a higher score.

Hanabi is the first card game where cards are hold backwards. We are so use to holding cards in front of our hands, we forget that the back of the cards are special too! Normies always have to intervene and say "you are doing it wrong" when really you are playing the game correctly. This game scares normies. A lot of ludic telekinesis is going on behind the cards.

## 76. Hare & Tortoise / Around the World in 80 Days (1979) □

A hand management racing game about by card game academic, David Parlett. Players move by playing "carrot" cards from their hand. To move more spaces, a player must spend carrot cards worth of that listed movement points. You may also move backwards to collect more cards, like in Cartagena. To cross the finish line, a player needs at least 10 or fewer carrot points. There is also a Rabbit space that offers a random outcome. There is no roll and moving. Everything happens through playing cards. Hare & Tortoise is all about card deduction and thinking ahead. The farther you are, the player behind has a better advantage, hence the story about "the tortoise and the hare." An unpredictable racing game that rewards playing cards at the right time. A strange seesaw exercise where the cards replace roll and move.

## 77. Harry Potter TCG (2001) □

An underrated children's trading card game similar to Neopets TCG. Each player has a unique character that gives them a special power. The object of the game is to eliminate the opponent by making him draw his last card from his deck, similar to Battletech CCG. Players draw lesson, creature and spell cards. Lesson cards pay for the cards, creature cards do damage to the other player, and spell cards are played and discarded. Like in Netrunner, players have actions to spend that can be used in any order and as many times. Also, there is no hand limit. The game is very basic and more easier to understand than Magic: The Gathering. An underrated classic which is played by Harry Potter fans and nostalgic Ludics. Like in Battletech CCG, the cards control the game. Let them open your mind.

## 78. Heimlich & Co. (1984) □

The first euro game right next to Sid Sackson's Bazaar or Aquire. Each player has a secret agent they are playing. The board is circular, and reaches up to 0 to 10 spaces with a single -3 space. The safe is placed on space 7 during setup. On each turn, a player rolls a single die. They may split up that number and move any agents that number of spaces forward. Once a spy lands on the same space where the safe is, the score is tallied up, and then the player chooses a different space where the safe goes. The game is over after an agent passes 41 points. All agents are revealed. Everyone loses if the winning agent belongs to no one. Players make a guess which player has which agent after one player passes 29 points. Correct answers receive 5 extra points at the end of the game. The 2018 edition has Top Secret cards that create a chaotic environment. This was also the first game to introduce the Euro concept of the "Kramerleiste," a victory track named after the designer, Wolfgang Kramer. Heimlich & Co. is a bluffing game that makes Ludics paranoid. All Euro games should be like this one. The roll and move is used in such a way that is innovative and cool. A true masterpiece in Ludism.

## 79. HeroQuest (1989) □

Most Gen-Xers were introduced to roleplaying by this game, and not Frank Mentzer's Basic D&D. The game comes with a dungeon board, miniatures, dice, cards, a game master screen, and a scenario book, but the players are encouraged to create their own scenarios. HeroQuest is actually a "game system." The game master uses the combat system and objects to create a roleplaying game on the spot. Hypothetically, you can play Heroquest with pencil, paper, and dice. Combat is resolved by showing dice with funny shapes on them. Movement is rolled for on a square map and treasure cards and randomly drawn. Heroquest is a solid introduction to roleplaying games and encourages players to make up the rules. This game is a classic in Ludism. If only more games were just things in a box and the rules just said, "Do what you want with this stuff, I don't care!"

## 80. Highway Holocaust (1988) □

While Fighting Fantasy created a stable second person narrative, the work of Joe Dever introduced more sophisticated mechanics. One such book, Highway Holocaust, gave the player an advance inventory. Dice results are determine by two d10s, where the player checks the results on a chart. Every minor detail is written in this solo adventure surviving a post-apocalyptic fallout world. The Lone Wolf roleplaying game and series, also by Dever, is very similar to Highway Holocaust. Dever's d10 system adds a level of both elegance and sophistication. Different dice and mechanics can be used to turn the second person narrative into a roleplaying game. Highway Holocaust exploits all the sense and lets the player choose their destiny. The second-person narrative is the only narrative for Ludism.

## 81. History of The World (1991) ☐

History of The World tries to combine Britannia, Ancient Conquest, and Diplomacy into one game. The game is played over 7 rounds, or "epochs." At the end of each round, players score points and then change into a new civilization. There is a drafting mechanism where players are constantly deciding which civilization they will play. Like Diplomacy, there is both land and sea units, and like Risk, combat is resolved with dice. Ties kill both the attacker and defender. The player with the highest score after the 7th round wins. This game has a great amount of complexity. It stands on the shoulders of other great abstract war games. It is a nice balance of hand management, dice rolling, area control akin to Diplomacy, and character-shifting from Britannia. This game is an alternative to a taking an actual history class about the world.

## 82. Hoax (1981) ☐

This Glass Bead Game introduced the concept of hidden roleplaying. The object of the game is to be the last one standing, or be called out on a hoax, but actually telling the truth. Everyone has a real identity, but can lie and pretend they are someone else. Every turn, a player must announce an action that a character can do. If caught doing something out of character, other players may call them out on a hoax. But players can also make an accusations and defeat opponents if they guess their character correctly. The point of the character power is to collect three different colored resources and spend three of each on hints. The ambiguity is in the air and everyone is paranoid. A true ludic can role play their character and not get caught at the same time. The game becomes a social experiment on who is the most cunning. Games like Love Letter borrowed many elements from Hoax. I wouldn't mind a sect of Ludism that just plays this game.

### 83. **Illuminati** (1987) ☐

Illuminati is a card game that mixes Cosmic Encounter and Risk together. Each player has a unique conspiracy group which has a special power and victory condition. Traditionally, players must control a certain amount of "groups" (or cards) in order to win the game. Groups are attached to their main conspiracy group and megabucks (like troops in risk) is placed on them. Megabucks is spent to increase the dice roll number during control, neutralize, or destroy actions. A player must roll equal to or less than the target number in order to succeed. Often opponents are spending megabucks to get the target number in the negatives. Megabucks is generated through an income number on each group. Players are constantly trying to control groups from each other or from the uncontrolled area, which more groups come out every turn. The game gets very political fast. You can also trade groups in this game like Monopoly. Chris Crawford has advocated this game as a cult classic. The theme of Alex Jones conspiracy theories expands the mind of any ludic. Ludism in a nutshell.

### 84. **Imperial** (2006) ☐

Another modern Euro area control game that is diceless. This game introduces the "Rondel" mechanic. Basically, a spinner that is not random. A player chooses one of the next three spaces and performs an action, going in a cycle. You build cities, military units, and research technology. Whoever has the most victory points wins. This game might feel like a dreaded multiplayer solitaire, but because of the nature being a war game, players can make both political and interactive choices. However, the game suffers from a lack of luck. This Euro challenges the soulless model by returning to its war game roots. By focusing on politics and interaction, we can ignore the computing, number-crunching aspects of game. The nostalgia of Diplomacy is quite present as well.

**85. Imperium / King's Road (2001)** ☐

I could recommend El Grande, but to be honest, it's an old game and implemented the modern economic Euro game which is a bad thing. There are many other great area control games. One forgotten gem was Reiner Knizia's Imperium, or reissued as King's Road in 2017. Imperium was released along side a collection of Roman games. The game has a simple strategy of putting down pieces, claiming territory, and scoring points. Players put their cards face down and simultaneously reveal them. Special cards do things and lesser points are rewarded to the follow-up players. Whoever has the highest score wins. There is not other simple area control game than Imperium, as roll and move is to Parcheesi. I do recommend the King's Road edition over Imperium. The game is not luck based and like Chess, there is only choices. Imperium mixes the Euro game with area control. Play this game in the park and covert people into Ludism.

**86. Invasion of the Air-Eaters / The Air Eaters Strike Back! (1979)** ☐

A two-player pocket war game where aliens must turn the earth into air they can breath. The humans are trying to kill them. The aliens are somewhat overpowered compared to the humans, and the human player must survive the alien bombardment, similar to the game Ogre. Combat is resolved by rolling dice. The sequel adds much more maps and variation. This is a traditional hex war game that takes place on a Risk map. The theme is abstract and cartoony where it grabs the attention of the non-wargamer. Like many games of the 70s, this was the first step towards ludic board games. It also has the same vibe as The Awful Green Things From Outer Space. A must have!

## 87. Junta (1978) □

A classic political game that is actually two games in one. Junta is a card game that takes elements from Mafia/Werewolf. One player is the president and everyone wants to assassinate him. Each character controls an army around the board. Once an assassination is attempted, a war game happens. Afterwards, new roles are assigned. The game keeps continuing until the player who has the most money in their Swiss bank account wins. There can be a time limit, or the game ends when there is no money left. Ludic paranoia is evident through rigged democratic voting. And like in Democrazy, unexpected cards can change the voting process. Junta is endless. Sometimes, players should not assassinate the current president and only assassinate when the timing is right. The game is rather a mix between Democrazy and Diplomacy. Nothing is ever secure. A ludic experiment simulating government collapse.

## 88. Kill Doctor Lucky (1996) □

Ironically called, "the family board game of murder in the dark." An abstract game that parodies Clue. The object of the game is to kill Dr. Lucky, alone in a room with him. Dr. Lucky moves through each room as other players try to catch up and kill him. You get "spite tokens" when you fail to kill him, which increase your power in the next murder attempt. Failure cards are played to stop other players, Weapons cards are used to attempt to kill Dr. Lucky, and Room cards are used to move Dr. Lucky or your player pawn around the board. All players start in the center of the board with six cards. On your turn, you may make a free move, and then play an action. If you are in a named room, draw a card. Kill Dr. Lucky shares similarities with other "Take That" card games like Time Breaker. A fast-past card game where murder is fun.



## 89. Killer Bunnies and The Quest For The Magic Carrot (2002) ☐

Like Cuttle, this game was supposedly invented before Magic: The Gathering, yet failed to be recognized as a genius game. James Ernest praises the games for celebrating play. With just a core set and a few booster packs, the game is an exciting patchwork system of playing. You are in search of "the magic carrot." The carrot is rewarded through the carrot deck, which are actually lottery tickets. Once all the carrots are taken, a lottery is drawn. Whoever has the winning lottery carrot card wins the game. The player who has more carrots has a higher chance of winning. More expansions introduce mini games irrelevant to winning more carrots, but security against other player cards. Cards are played two turns in advance, since cards are played facedown in "the belt." You may only participate in the lottery if you have bunnies alive. So the tickets act as a draw breaker for those who still have bunnies in the game. Players should focus on killing other bunnies. That's the name of the game. Killer Bunnies becomes a cluster of toys in a game that is all about one thing, ...playing. This game defines Ludism. Killer Bunnies celebrates play while creating ludic synergy.

## 90. King's Bounty (1991) ☐

A board game based off the video game of the same name. Players start by creating a character or choosing a premade one. Three stats include Strength, Spirit, and Skill. Each turn starts with a random encounter. You roll 2d10 and consult the gamebook like in Barbarian Prince. You spend your action points moving around, buying things, and doing other things. There is no cards in this game, but a gamebook you must always consult. The interaction is low. Very similar to DungeonQuest and Talisman, you tend to watch others play their story. Like Fighting Fantasy, the stats are aided in combat by the roll of a d10. Whoever has the most money at the end of the game wins. This is a mix of many good games. It's actually quite better than the video game. A whole fantasy novel could be experienced in a single session. This takes the gamebook and inserts it into a board game. A classic abstract roleplaying game.

## 91. Kingmaker (1974) ☐

A war game using cards that tries to simulate the historical event of the War of the Roses, but ends up creating a new genre of board games. The board is a map of England. Each player controls a faction to control and influence heirs to manipulate the king and to take down other heirs. Kingmaker is a card game with a twist of politics very similar to Junta and Warrior Knights. Nobles can attack each other and the random deck causes chaos. There are usually two strong players that control the houses, which other players stay away from until they become "king." A player's hand can change the politics of the game at anytime, even if he is in a weak position. Laws can be changed to ones advantage or disadvantage. Like in Junta, strategic position is everything. Combat is basic number comparison and looking up the results on a table. The more players the better. Backstabbing, treachery, and abstract negotiating makes this the antiwar game. Kingmaker is not historically accurate, which is a good thing. And it can drag on forever. Players must decide who to "kingmake" next in order to win. This is infinite bliss.

## 92. Kings & Things (1986) ☐

A bluffing game using a modular hex board full of different armies and terrains. If you build a citadel and hold it for one entire turn, you win the game. If there is more than one citadel, one citadel has to be eliminated. Combat is resolved rolling a die, with a number equal to or less than the target number. Dice is often rolled for stealing, hiring, and saving. Land hexes are dealt randomly like in Catan. Phases are sequenced from collecting gold, moving, combat, to building. There is kingsmaking because of the nature of being positioned near bad terrain, and leader-bashing if players are smart enough. The game is modular enough to create a new game every time it is played. This is a humorous twist on the hex war game which helped create similar games like Nexus Ops and Warcraft: The Board Game. Kings & Things is elegant in design and advocates exploration. A lot is going on in a small space. The best hex mutator out there.

### 93. **Knightmare Chess** (1991) ☐

Ludics prefer to play Nightmare Chess over regular Chess. Nightmare Chess is a deck of cards which can be played during a normal game of Chess. New rules are added, or wacky events happen. Players can build their own decks or draw cards from one shared deck. Gary Gygax loved this game. Also, Ludics should read The Classified Encyclopedia of Chess Variants by David Pritchard. Pick a variant from the book and add it with Nightmare Chess. All game design originates from cultures creating variants and variants creating new games. Chess has been modified to create new war and area control games that are now classics in Ludism. An understanding of Nightmare Chess is an understanding of Ludism.

### 94. **Kremlin** (1986) ☐

A card game that recreates the crazy and unreliable nature of the soviet government. The game has a board, character cards, and faction markers. The object of the game is to be the faction that controls the party chief at the end of the game. You have to assign influence points to the politicians, and whoever has the most points controls them. Each politician has a special power that can distort the game. Revealing influence points is apart of the bluffing aspect of the game. Whoever controls the party chief can move people on the hierarchy. After you do an action, a politician ages. Politicians die and move out. The hierarchy is constantly evolving and players are bidding for the best politician that will let them to control the entire Kremlin. Learn Russian history as you backstab one another for political power like in Democracy. This game teaches us about nepotism. A great game for NazBols.

## 95. Legend of Camelot (1987) □

An obscure family board game that predates Nintendo's Advance Wars. The object of the game is to either capture the opponent's castle or capture all of their knights. Up to four players can play with units including four ships, four catapults, eight knights, a dragon, a dragon slayer, and an attack bridge and scaling ladder. On a turn, the player gets four action points to spend on either movement or shooting. They roll the dice and pick a unit to move. Units capture other units occupying the same space or shooting at them. The game board is made up of squares like in Campaign. Each piece may only move once during a turn. Ships move only in the water and roll one die to move and two to shoot. Catapults move two dice on a road, one dice in the meadow, and cannot move in the forest. Knights move three dice on the road, and so forth. Each time you capture or hit a piece, you get a bonus roll. The game is like Shogi mixed with dice rolling and terrain hindrance. The board and pieces are aesthetically pleasing. An elegant game that teaches Ludics about game design.

## 96. Lemma (1987) □

A strange token placing game where players make up non-contradictory rules. One player must write down all rules introduced as they play the game. On a players turn, make up a new rule and demonstrate it on the board. The rule will be in effect for the rest of the game. This rule cannot contradict the previous rule. Only the game board and pieces can be used in the rules. If you cannot make up a rule, you lose the game. Players may also challenge rules brought into the game by introducing a new rule. A player who makes an illegal move must make a legal rule. Eventually, a player will make a mistake and lose either from a new rule or making an illegal move. This game is very similar to the social game Nomic. An exercise about the limits of a game. Ask, "what is a game?" What rules do we make up? Lemma teaches us to be good game designers. What rules make sense, and what rules hurt us? Apply these rules to other mediums and we can find hidden ludic synergy.

## 97. Long Live The King (2006) ☐

A unique roleplaying game that acts more like a board game than using pencil and paper. Similar to the game Hoax, players are vying for the king's throne. Like Dune and Cosmic Encounter, each player has a unique ability that effects the entire politics of the game. Minor characters, represented by cards, can also be used to role play. Resources are distributed in the first phase. The second phase is the "diplomacy" phase, just like in the game of the same name. And finally, all actions are executed. Players also can make alliances with one another to win over the throne. Petitions are created and voted on to create new rules. Cards are played to gain advantages or to throw penalties against other opponents. Like The Bullwinkle and Rocky Role-playing Party Game, this game is an introduction to the roleplaying mechanic. While Dungeons & Dragons is a series of game mechanics and rules, Long Live The King gives you everything in a tiny box. Roleplaying/board game hybrid are descended from Cosmic Encounter, and its only natural that these rare type of games are related to The Glass Bead Game. Freedom often rewards us with ludic synergy. A true game with many hidden strategies.

## 98. Lord of The Rings (2000) ☐

Many critics agree that this is Reiner Knizia's best board game. This is a cooperative game where the game can only be won by the survivors. If any player is eliminated, they lose and do not share the victory with the team. This game came out right before the popularity of the Peter Jackson films. It's really an abstract game of set matching with a Lord of The Rings theme. The game is quite difficult and provides high replayability, although it is ultimately a puzzle. Knizia attempted to create a modernized Lord of The Rings board game that takes influence from Riddle of the Ring. Cards and dice determine random events. There is also a final boss battle like in Rouge Trooper. Player elimination stops the game from being a bland puzzle and the best players become the winners. This win/lose condition has been popularized in games like Skitgubbe. Cooperative games can be ludic if players are political and creative, thus creating ludic synergy. I highly recommended buying the expansion to add on the competitive variant. The plastic cones and pieces create a martian feel to this game. Imagine playing this game in space.

## 99. Love Letter (2012) □

A simple deduction card game where the last surviving player wins. The deck is only 16 cards and the games last less than a minute. Each player is dealt a card in the beginning of the game. At the start of a turn, a player draws a card and plays one of the two cards in his hand. The cards rank 1 through 9. Guard cards (ranked 1) make a guess what the other player has in their hand. If guessed correctly, that player is out of the game. Other cards do many other things and it's quite possible to play the game with a deck of tarot or normal playing cards. If all cards from the deck are drawn, the player with the highest rank card wins. A ludic alternative to Guess Who? Can be brought anywhere and enjoyed in any setting. A simple game where the cards dictate the game.

## 100. Lugu (2014) □

Imagine a card game that has no rules, but are rather trading cards featuring Ellsworth Kelly inspired art. I'm not so sure what exactly the rules are to this game. Supposedly, it's a "story telling" game about looking at Rorschach blots. There are 22 unique cards for each player up to 4. The game that is commonly played with Lugu cards requires "story telling" and trying to make sense of the cards that the player has. Lugu, like playing and tarot cards, is a modular game system. I often try making up my own games with Lugu cards. You could actually play the game of Lemma with Lugu cards. Appreciating art requires a reaction. Games require interaction. Lugu cards are interactive. This adds a whole new philosophy on how we see modern art. Art can be interacted with, and Lugu is that gateway. This game is the perfect introduction to the concept of Ludism. Also play Nomic or use Piecepack.

## 101. Magic Realm (1979) □

One of the first modular fantasy games that mixed elements of Dungeons and Dragons and traditional war games. An outrageous limit of 16 players can play this game (never happens, but is quite possible). Each player takes on a role of a character and has an objective they must complete. The player who wins their goal first is the winner. The random nature of monsters and events incubated such games like Talisman, DungeonQuest, Prophecy, and Zombie in my Pocket. Magic Realm is an early board game that created the roleplaying genre with limited components than using paper and pencil. The hexes create something that is unique within exploration that most roleplaying games are lacking. It's very similar to the same exploration in Rouge Trader. Magic Realm works as a "workshop" for creating new fantasy literature, the same technique used in Barbarian Prince. Highly recommend for those looking to go on a journey of self-discovery. A ludic masterpiece. Noted as the "best fantasy board game ever."

## 102. Magical Athlete (2002) □

A Japanese board game that takes a Parcheesi board and creates a betting race game out of it. Richard Garfield finds this game fascinating. Before the game begins, each player gets an amount of money to bid on racers. The racers (cards) come out one by one on a bid slide. The card closest to the deck is worth more than the card far away from it. A player may buy a racer or pass. Eventually, each player will have a set of racers. Racers are bought for their unique powers. After players bought all their racers, the race begins. Each player chooses a racer, and reveals it once everyone selects one. The race track is a Parcheesi board made up of 1 to 30 spaces. Each racer starts on 1, and rolls a die to move forward. Special powers may be triggered by the player, or is mandatory. The racer in first place wins points, and the follow ups earn lesser points. Each race gradually increase the points and this can turn the game around if a losing player wins the third or last race. The player who has the highest score is the winner. Magical Athlete is a unique spin on the racing game that it adds a layer of strategy before the race begins. Getting the right set of racers, plus the uncertainty, makes the game a balance between strategy and luck. The automative process of the race feels lifelike. The anime art direction is insightful about our destiny towards anime futurism. A true ludic racing game.

### 103. **Man Bites Dog** (2002) ☐

Most word games are boring. Scrabble is ok and only benefits the logophile. Boggle is fantastic because we look at art and create a reaction from it. But **Man Bites Dog** pays tribute to Weekly World News and bizarro fiction. Normies don't like it, and eccentric people are attracted to weird games. The deck is made up of words and phrases where players will create a paranormal gossip headline. It is up to the players, or a single "editor," to determine which is the best headline. The player scores points and play continues with a new hand. Like **Story Cubes**, this card game is about generating paranormal gossip. The goal is to win, but that is shadowed over the fact to be the most creative in the play group that also reads bizarro fiction. A game that provokes an intellectual discussion. More people should be aware of nazi-ufo conspiracy theories.

### 104. **Mascarade** (2013) ☐

A card game where players try to guess the hidden identities of each player through a shell game. Each player has an identity, which is memorized once they are placed face down in front of them. A shell game happens and the cards are switched to other players. On their turn, a player may swap their current face down card for another card, or claim to be somebody else. Each character has a power that changes the game drastically. The game is directly influenced from Hoax. Ludic paranoia will ensue. The winner is the player that has 13 coins or meets its winning condition (The Cheat character needs 10 coins). A modern hidden identities games that promotes roleplaying. The ludic version of the shell game.



## 105. Merchant of Venus (1988) ☐

Although there is a new Fantasy Flight edition that is up to date with modern technology, I do recommend playing the original first edition. Merchant of Venus is a space trader game, where one player must supply and demand items across a galaxy board. It is somewhat a racing game, but there is a level of unpredictability with the nature of delivering. Imagine being a UPS driver in space and the clients are aliens. Merchant of Venus does have aspects of an early Euro game. The abstract nature of delivering goods across the universe feels more like a thematic science fiction game than an actual automated math formula. This game belongs in the family of "faithful science fiction scenarios" based upon classic sci-fi pulps. The video game Master of Orion shares the same epic nature of a living alien civilization. Merchant of Venus takes the roll and move mechanic and adds mini game objectives, somewhat like the nature of Talisman. It can be a long game, but adds a level of rich adventures. Newer games like Xia takes the system and adds in hex tiles and combat. Merchant of Venus is the classic science fiction economy game.

## 106. Mertwig's Maze (1988) ☐

Tom Wham's games are the some of the best board games ever made. One of Wham's cult classics is the fantasy adventure game, Mertwig's Maze. The object of the game is to be the heir of the throne. This is done by going through "levels" until you reach the final level. The game was originally intended for Advance Dungeons and Dragons Second Edition, but like The Great Khan Game, it has nothing to do with the system. Players "grind" their characters until they go out in the wilderness. Each level takes place on it's own sheet. Mertwig's Maze is Wham's version of Talisman. Wham adds in a lot of stuff to his games until they make sense. What I love about Mertwig's Maze is that it tells a cartoonish story through playing mini games. Dice are often used. It is against everything Keith Burgun criticized in his game design books. Everyone must play this game.

### 107. Middle Empire (2015) ☐

This game is very rare and quite regional. The man who made this game tried to put The Settlers of Catan and Wolfgang Kramer's action system all through the use of cards. However, the game breaks during a two-player game, as it becomes a racing game to get the right set of cards first. The art direction is reminiscence of the cult classic movie, Napoleon Dynamite. Each player must build a stronghold before the other player does. The games interaction is based upon playing attack cards and responding with defense cards. This is really a card game. Middle Empire is very obscure and attracts eccentric-loving Ludics. Highly recommended.

### 108. Midnight Party / Escape from the Hidden Castle (1989) ☐

Imagine musical chairs played on a Parcheesi board. That's what this game is all about. Each player controls a number of figures that go around a rectangle board through rolling and moving. The phantom comes out of the center and tries to capture the player's figures. The figures must run into rooms worth a certain amount of points. If a figure is captured by the phantom, points are deducted from a player's score. Once all figures are in the rooms, players play another round, setting up the figures again. After three rounds, whoever has the highest score wins. The exciting part of the game comes from being chased by the phantom, where all movement is dictated by the roll of a die. The press-your-luck aspect creates fear, knowing that someone is out to get you. A game where being chased is a fun experience.

## 109. Mille Bornes (1954) □

Before there was Magic: The Gathering, Cuttle or 1000 Blank Card, there was Mille Bornes. The object of the game is to get the highest score. On your turn, you draw a card and play card. If not, discard a card. Many shenanigans can happen with cards such as speed limit, stop light, out of gas, accident, and other hazards. Each card has a response card to discard the stopping hazard. For example, you need a green light card in order to play a mile card. Players usually end the game once they reach 5000 points, or when the deck runs out. Players assume rules from the cards with just pictures on it. Mille Bornes invented the "Take That" card game. It sparks the imagination of playing cards doing wacky things. The cards have control over us. Be careful with Mille Bornes! The game dictates mind control. This is a cataclysmic moment in the development of Ludism.

## 110. Monopoly (1936) □

Haters gonna hate. This is the ultimate family board game. Monopoly took the Parchessi format and created something different than racing around the board. The game introduces player elimination through buying property. Money acts like the players vitality. Money is always being spent and gain. What seems like a zero player game is actually a competitive game about cutthroat capitalism. I recommend reading Ken Koury's book Monopoly Strategy to really appreciate the math behind the game. The only interaction that will happen in Monopoly is between the auction, the trading, and the building actions. Trading requires a firm understanding of the human condition. Building houses at the right time is also a strategic move. And of course, you always want to buy the oranges and reds over anything else (light blues and maroons if you are desperate). The game is often recognized as horrible, traumatizing, pre-boomer family ritual. Ludics understand Monopoly is about the struggle in life under capitalism. Making the big deal to steal the entire game is the winning move. The time to execute the deal requires experienced observation. All modern board games came from Monopoly in one form or another.

### 111. **Monster Derby** (1994) ☐

This is racing game with stats and unique abilities. Each player has a monster and each monster can do certain things. Roll dice, move, and roll to attack. Similar to Magical Athlete, but adds in terrain hinderance, combat, charts, and that there is no auction phase. This is a simple game based upon Dungeon and Dragons monsters fighting one another while racing. Many things can happen with just a roll. The interaction windows are spastic. Take Parchessi and add monsters. This is what you get. A lab test gone crazy. Monster Derby is a great introduction to Ludism.

### 112. **Morisi / Isi** (2000) ☐

An abstract tile-hex laying game that looks like, and feels like a rainbow. Color cubes are scattered across the hexes. Players must make connections to one "city" to another one. It's an abstract game. You place tokens down, make connections, and pick up a colored token (other players cant see what you have). Token are used to spend making paths. Isi plays in a similar fashion. Whoever has the highest score wins. A very simple and artsy game. There is a hidden war game element to this game. The game is about area control and investing in resources. A pretty game that has the potential to be played by aliens. Smoke weed and play this game. It's good.

### 113. **Murphy's Magic Island** (1992) ☐

A strange board game designed by an esoteric cult. It's a giant, modular tile maze board. The Lost Horizons Games Catalog makes some of the most strangest exploration games ever. Like G.O.O.T.M.U., each player must collect a colored token and return home with it. There is a lot of random outcomes with the roll of a die. A goofy racing game that is unpredictable. The box art and design is amazing. It's Parcheesi with a ludic twist. Supposedly, this game is about an actual island, and like The Star Game, Murphy's Magic Island is a tool used for meditation. A highly sought after game.

### 114. **Neo Pets TCG** (2003) ☐

This is a children's version of Richard Garfield's Star Wars TCG. Cards are played in areas, dice are rolled, and the deck is customized. The object of the game is to "bank" 21 points. The 4 stats of each card add on to the simple dice rolling combat. Decks are limited to 40 cards, making the game minimal and quick. The game is usually over in seven turns. Kids often collected the cards and didn't know how to play the game. This TCG is unique because it utilized dice. It's really a simple war game where cards are lined up to fight. Each player must be careful what cards to play. Even crass commercial games have ludic synergy hidden within them.

## 115. Netrunner (1996) □

This is the best asymmetrical trading card game ever made. One player plays the "runner," while the other player plays the "corp." The object of the game is to score 7 agenda points which are found only in the corp's deck. The runner scores agenda cards by making a "run" on the corp's deck, discard, hand, or "remote server." The corp scores the agenda cards in his deck by placing them facedown, putting tokens on them, and scoring the card when it reaches the required advancement cost. The game has a bluffing aspect, where the runner is unsure where he is running against. The runner must always use deduction and take a chance when looking for the corp's agenda cards, like a game of Go Fish. The corp may even bluff the runner by advancing a trap card and harming the runner. The runner can lose if he discards more cards than he has in his hand. The deck building is strong in this game and rewards crafty and artistic players. Drafting a corp deck feels like creating a "dungeon," which the brave runner must face. In other words, the corp player is the game master, and the runner is the test subject. Netrunner is a balance between the player and the "game designer." A true ludic experience that features many methods of play. Better than Magic: The Gathering!

## 116. Nexus Ops (2005) □

A traditional hex game like Amoeba Wars, but instead using alien creatures fighting one another for points. Think of a war happening on top of The Settlers of Catan map, just like in Viktory II or 504. Tiles are placed randomly and each map is different. Each hex has an exploration token on it which is flipped over once discovered. Each unit moves one hex each, unless noted. Units mine for currency, which is spent on more units. Cards are played to turn around events. Missions are accomplished to gain victory points. Dice is used in combat. Nexus Ops is perhaps more straightforward than Amoeba Wars or Warcraft: The Board Game. The random nature of the game leaves players to improvise. The game is like a micro version of Viktory II. Nexus Ops teaches hex war games at the smallest, abstract level of play. Every ludic has played this game in some form or another.

### 117. Nomic (1982) ☐

An intellectual game about changing rules. Often cited as a "universal mutator." You are trying to change the game to your advantage, similar to Lemma. Players must debate the wisdom of each new rule. Usually, new rules are discussed and passed like in Diplomacy. It is popular to use a democratic system like in the game, Democrazy. There is no psychical components to Nomic, just people. If players understand the nature of the mutator, then they can walk the path of Ludism. Fluxx and Nightmare Chess are directly influenced from Nomic. Mutation offers a way to get high without drugs.

### 118. Nuclear War (1965) ☐

A card game where everyone can lose. People can also build their own decks with provided expansions. This was the first deck-building game of any kind. The game features a spinner which can determine the results of the game. Like Mille Bornes, players play "population" cards like points. "Top Secret" cards are played immediately. The goal is to wipe out the population of the other player. You play nuclear missiles facedown to launch at an opponent. There is a small chance that all players will lose by the the spinner. This game is about the upcoming nuclear holocaust that will destroy capitalism. An insightful game about violence and revenge. True ludic games are self-destructive. Nothing is safe. Not even the rules.

### 119. Orion (1971) □

A game system that uses seed shape colors of red, blue, green, and yellow on a 5 by 5 circle board. While the game included 15 games to play, players often made up their own. This is one of the oldest modern game systems predating Cosmic Encounter, Dungeons and Dragons, and Piecepack. A majority of Orion games are abstract area control games. However, add dice and cards and the games will become extremely ludic. Orion also had a "cosmic" feel and theme that was intergalactic and science-fiction-like. Orion was the first game to incubate the concept of Ludism.

### 120. Pass The Pigs (1977) □

Why use dice when you can use plastic pigs? All you can do is throw two plastic pigs and count up the score. The way the pigs stand give you more points. Think outside the box. ...Stop using dice. Use plastic pigs instead! See if you can get both the pigs to stand on top of their nose. Use the pig numeric system to count. A real ludic would trust the pigs. What plastic pigs can do is beyond our mental understanding of physics.



## 121. **Phantom vs. Phantom** (1980) ☐

This is a much more faster and quicker version of Stratego with a ghostly theme. Like Stratego, the opponent cannot see your army. You can only see what "good" and "evil" ghosts you control. Each ghost moves orthogonally. To win, you can get rid all of your evil ghosts, get rid of all your opponent's good ghosts, or touch the opponent's ending square. This allows a strategy to bluff your way through and trap your opponent. Otherwise, you can run off the board and win the game when neither strategy works. A very surprising game that focuses on reading your opponents psychology. It's like communicating with the dead like an Ouija board.

## 122. **Piecepack** (2001) ☐

A game system that uses board game pieces. New games can be created with only these set of components. Very similar to the Sly and Orion system. I recommend getting The Infinite Board Game edition by W. Eric Martin while studying Piecepack. Game designers should use this system alone to create their own games. Piecepack include 24 tiles, 24 coins, 4 pawns, and 4 dice. You could make this game yourself with Rook Cards and a few other pieces. Piecepack is a toolbox that advocates ludic synergy. Use this system and Looney Pyramids to play games like Alien City.

### 123. Pieces of Eight (2006) ☐

A "resume" game that uses coins as a war game. Unlike Diskwars, players build their own "deck" like in a trading card game. The gimmick is that they are coins, and there is no written rules on the coins. That's it. The game is just a bag of coins. A ludic can make sense of anything, no matter what form it takes. Use the power of Nomic to determine the meaning and purpose behind the game. A lot of classic board and card game terminology is used in this game, although to be honest, this game can be played with a deck of playing cards. Pieces of Eight is a gimmick, just like Pass The Pigs. But have you ever thought about playing a game just with pennies? An inane concept but works in this game. The coins are nice to touch though.

### 124. Pit (1904) ☐

To emulate a real time card game is interesting. Pit has done a wonderful job doing it for the past century. The object of Pit is to trade cards until one player has a full set of matching cards. This is done by bluffing, making lies, and sometimes telling the truth to trade cards with the opponent. Once a player has a full set of matching cards, the player rings the bell (if there is one) and immediately announces a set. The player scores points listed on the cards. Play continues with a new set of cards until they score an X amount of points to win the game. Significantly, most people learned to trade through Pit. Pit could also be played turn-by-turn as well. The trading mechanic in The Settlers of Catan was directly lifted from this game, and as well Monopoly. Pit remains to be the ultimate trading game. No rules hold this game down. Players may do whatever to get the correct set of cards. This game teaches a psychological technique that is beneficial to all trading. You could play this game forever.

## 125. Plague! (1991) □

An independent game that comes in a really huge box. The map looks like it was hand-drawn and stenciled with color pencils. Players race to get dead bodies house to house in their wagons while delivering them to the pit. The first to get 99 points wins. Players reach for rat and fly tokens in a red bag. Also, cards are drawn and chaos is assured. This game never really went through a proper play-testing. It was meant to be both a historical simulation and a joke. History gamers understand the humor of this game. No one has ever heard of this game but Ludics. The unbalanced system with random cards and tokens makes the game fun. Another charming way to think about the dead. A family game that the family is embarrassed to have in the attic.

## 126. Pretense (2015) □

This is not a game. It's actually a game about people playing a game. Pretense is a joke about the lame, consumer culture that is Gen-Xers getting together to play new board games every week that don't make sense. Cards are assign to players. If one player is caught texting, or reading the rulebook, or anything written on said card, you call them out on it and get a point. After three game sessions, or within the next 4 hours, whoever has the most points wins Pretense (and "game night"). Pretense only works with an orthodox, market-made concept of playing board games at a board game store from the hours of 7-10PM. You force this game upon strangers to make their night feel more important than it is. A game that is only ludic on the fact players start to question consumer culture and capitalist control. Ludism promotes a space away from capitalism. Pretense shows you the world inside, only to look for something outside of it.

### 127. **Prophecy** (2002) ☐

A Czech version of Talisman. What else is there to say? There are two expansions of this game. You walk around a board, picking up upgrades and equipment cards. A player needs two to four of the artifacts to win the game. Depending how you play, the game is very flexible with variants. Each player starts with a character. The rest is just Talisman. "Strength, Willpower, Gold, Experience," anything I miss? Draw cards, attack baddies, gain stuff. Eventually you will draw the things you need. An interesting variant of Talisman. A forgotten fad of the 2000s era.

### 128. **Psyche-paths / Kaliko** (1968) ☐

A strange game about connecting paths. It has a huge hippy or psychedelic vibe to it. This game is about aesthetics, and is likely to give you a high experience. The gameplay is similar to Tom Jolly's Knots. It's really all about making connections until there is nothing left to connect. Psyche-paths is an art piece. This is the Partridge Family Temple's Favorite board game. Recommended for readers of Alan Watts.

## 129. Pyramid Arcade (2016) ☐

A modular system that mimics The Glass Bead Game. Many games can be played with Looney Pyramids. Pyramids come in different colors and three sizes. A large piece with 3 pips is called a Queen, a medium piece with 2 pips is called a Drone, and a small piece with a single pip is called a Pawn. This system is meant to be like a standard playing card deck, but for Ludics. For an exoteric experience, Gnostica/Zarcana is a game played with Tarot cards and Looney Pyramids. More esoteric games, like Builders of R'lyeh, make sense of the Lovecraftian mythos and alien architecture behind the Pyramids. Aliens are said to have made this game, or at least they are a living James Turrell art piece. You must be under the influence of drugs or trying to communicate with the spirit world if you really enjoy Looney Pyramids. This game, next to Cosmic Encounter, is a reincarnation of The Glass Bead Game. It may be pyramids now, but soon it will turn to glass beads.

## 130. Realm / Sly / Blockade (1973) ☐

Realm is an abstract game that influenced Sid Sackson's Sly. It features a 12 by 12 board with 16 fields of 3 by 3 squares. The pieces in Sackson's Sly come in four colors of red, blue, green, and yellow and consist of a single cylinder, four triangles and six squares. Sackson provides six games with Sly. Just like Piecepack, Orion, and Looney Pyramids, advance players can make up their own games. Sly is a very underrated game system promoted by a legendary game designer. The pieces together on the board look like an alien landscape. This game system, along with Orion, help create Ludism.

### 131. Redshirts (2012) ☐

A cartoonish card game where you are trying to get rid of your Star Trek team. On your turn, you play a mission card on a team member. If they fail it, it's a good thing. You want to kill your entire team. Other players are playing cards to make you win those missions. An extreme "Take That" game where reaction after reaction happens until there is no cards left to play. Hand management is an important strategy in this game. It's hard to win because whoever has more team members draws more cards, hence having an advantage over other players who draw less and are closer to winning. An endless, yet fun, ping-pong game of self-mutilation. A cosmic roller coaster that goes up and down. It's like playing Doomtown, but you have to kill your posse than fight the opponent's posse. A clever and humorous game thats better than Munchkin.

### 132. Return of The Heroes (2003) ☐

Although the art in this game is horrible, it's so bad it's good. Another Talisman clone that uses a tile maps with a board similar to Merchant of Venus. Each player has a character, they move around the map, and they attack creatures. This game is very modular and new variants can be created from this game. In fact, the rule book is so poorly written, it's better to make up your own rules while playing this game. The game is straightforward and like a dumb-down version of Prophecy. There is something lost in translation because the game is German. The art in Return of The Heroes reminds me of Richard Garfields forgotten video game, Spectromancer. A more cartoonish version of Return of The Heroes is Tom Wham's Search for the Emperor's Treasure. Kids can play this game. This game is like a toolbox of things to use. Most players can already create stories out of it. But once the secrets are unlocked, the game designer will experience an extremely ludic game. A Talisman version of Merchant of Venus.

### 133. Ricochet Robots (1999) ☐

This board game does not move. In fact, players don't do anything in this game. Ricochet Robots is a robotic version of Boggle. Instead of finding words through an array of letters, players try to figure out how they can potentially program their robots to get to the finish point. The board is small and is randomly created. Once a player determines the route, they show it on the board. A new point is created, and players figure out the puzzle again. The game takes place mentally. Components are only used as reference markers. The game is actually a contest on who can react quicker to solving a puzzle. Ricochet Robots is an art piece which can spark an intellectual discussion about how pieces move in a game. The lesson is that games take place in the mind. It's something like what happens with two people use their psionic avatars to fight one another. An extended and interactive version of this game is RoboRally. Recommended for the ludic elitist. If you want the same experience in a smaller box, try Micro Robots by Andreas Kuhnekath.

### 134. Riddle of the Ring (1982) ☐

A classic board (or card) game based upon Lord of The Rings. The drawings are really cool and predate Magic: The Gathering aesthetics. It looks like a war game, but actually an adventure game. Riddle of the Ring, according to the back description, is somewhere between Monopoly and Dungeons and Dragons. The object of the game is to find the ring and take it to The Cracks of Doom. This is a competitive game, but can be cooperative. Movement and actions is used through cards, hence the map hinders movement and provides spaces to draw cards. Cards are also use to fight creatures and use to trade with other players. The plastic bag version of the game is much more difficult to come across than the Iron Crown edition. An exotic game that flirts with new age fiction and advocates a ludic toolbox. Maybe one of the first "Take That" fantasy board games ever made. A classic board game where the environment is unpredictable. An adventure that is better than the novels.

### 135. Risk (1957) ☐

A classic avant-garde board game that helped create the ludic revolution. Originally an art project that was suppose to demonstrate nuclear war, it was sold in America as a family game instead. Americans were exposed to the concept of war games through Risk. Risk takes place on the map of the world, and the object of the game is to conquer every single territory. An unlimited amount of army pieces can stay in a space at a time. During combat, if the opposing player has at least 4 armies, the opposing player rolls 3 dice. If the defending player has at least 2 armies, he rolls 2 dice. Both players roll the dice. Whoever has the highest dice roll destroys an opposing army pieces. Defender wins all ties. The opposing player may keep "risking" and trying to defeat the defender players country. A single army piece must exist in a country at a time. More conquered territories equal more army pieces during the resource phase. Risk is an amazing game with other people. Risking can harm you both in combat and in politics. Risk teaches Ludics the meaning of politics and all the ambiguous outcome games have. Cosmic Encounter based its own mechanics around Risk, and Cosmic Encounter is closest to the invention of The Glass Bead Games. A masterpiece in modern board games.

### 136. RoboRally (1994) ☐

A game where everyone controls a robot and must operate a program to accomplish the objective. Each game objective can be different. The most common is capturing the flags. Players have a hand of directional cards where the must place 5 cards face down in order. Each card is revealed and their robots makes that move. With each move, robots can make mistakes and fall onto conveyor belts, deathtraps, and push opponent robots. Because of the time limit, players will accidentally put down cards that are uncalled for when planning. Chaos happens while predictability goes wrong. Players must compromise with the cards they have and make directions not intended. Interactivity happens mostly by accident. RoboRally should of been a video game, but ended up being a board game instead. Think of Diplomacy without the alliances. RoboRally is a clever card game where the game controls you. The outcomes are organic. RoboRally was made for the computer programmer.



### 137. Rook (1906) ☐

While I could just recommend normal playing cards, Rook cards are for game designers. Instead of the European imagery, there are colored suits and numbers. The four suits are red, orange, green, and black. The numbers reach from 1 to 14. 1 can act like an ace, and 14 adds a level of variety. You can play any card game you like with a Rook deck. Rook decks make card games easier to understand. David Parlett has created a list of card games through his website at [pagat.com](http://pagat.com). Try playing some card games with a Rook deck instead. Play with just numbers and colors. I also recommend picking up a French Tarot deck as well.

### 138. Rouge Trooper (1987) ☐

A classic board game based upon the comic series. The object of the game is to find the traitor and kill him. The map is made up of hexes. Cards are dealt for events, just like in Talisman. Players have missions and must complete them to get clues. Once the player has 4 clue cards matching the traitor, they must go to his hex and fight him. After defeating the traitor (like a final boss), that player is the winner. Combat is basically rolling dice and comparing stats. Cards are unpredictable and reward players with a unique narratives. This is an underrated modular adventure game based upon a theme of English grimdark. More board games should thematically be like this one.

### 139. **Runebound** (2005) ☐

Avoid the third edition at all cost! The Runebound second edition was published during the golden age of Fantasy Flight games. It was meant as a rival product towards Talisman. It features a hex map like in Barbarian Prince and a decks of cards for each situation. There is a differences between Prophecy and Runebound compared to Talisman. What makes Runebound so unique is the expansions it offers and the alternative boards to play on. Players can mix and match components if they like. Runebound also had single character booster expansions that made the game feel like Cosmic Encounter (without the rule breaking). It was everything Dungeons and Dragons could of been but with components instead. The market for these games are hard to come by, as there are only a few board games left with dozens of expansions. It was a nice fantasy experience like Riddle of the Ring. I prefer this game over any Roguelike video game.

### 140. **Saboteur** (2004) ☐

A traitor game about gnomes. All the players are trying to get to the gold mine. However, there are traitors! Each turn, a player plays a corridor card and makes connections like in Waterworks. This line must connect to the gold in order for the players to win. There is a traitor among the group that doesn't want the players to score the gold. Traitors will sometimes pretend to be "the good guys" by playing a correct route towards the gold. And when the traitor wants to win, he makes excuses to turn the path a different way. If the players don't make it to the gold in time, the traitors win. Saboteur is fun to play with 8 or more people. The game is a psychological test about trust in a cooperative game. Everyone wants to win, and there is no compromise. Saboteur is the best traitor game ever made. This is the definition of such a game. All that is needed to play is a deck of cards and friends.

### 141. **Schotten Totten / Battle Line** (1999) ☐

There are nine "stones" that two players battle over. You build poker-like formations using numbered cards. Whoever plays the higher rank wins the stone. Control five stones or three adjacent stones to win the game. A pretty simple hand management and set game using a deck of 54 cards. You could play this game with a deck of Rook cards. The Battle Line version adds in unique tactic cards that change the rules to the game. It is advised you play with this expansion. An interesting card game that simulates a war game with numbers. Similar to the one-on-one battle and adjacent victory in Condottiere. A lot of movement, deduction, and bluffing. A war game without war.

### 142. **Shogun / Samurai Swords / Ikusa** (2006) ☐

Shogun was released in 1986 as a Milton Bradley war game apart of the Gamemaster series. Like Risk, players fight over territory until one player controls 35 territories. Money in Shogun is spent to determine turn order, fortifying territory, purchasing units, sending out secret units, or hiring a ninja that can assassinate units or spy on the opponent. There are four units with four different levels of power that attack in an ordered sequence. Commanders gain experience and increase in power. Combat is resolved through the rolls of d10s. Players are also eliminated from the game if three of their commanders and forces are killed or controlled. A simple and straightforward war game with a Japanese theme. A great alternative to Axis and Allies. Very chaotic back and forth combat.

### 143. Skat (1810-1817) ☐

A German three-player card game the Nazis use to play. The game is played with a special deck of Skat cards. A trick taking game where the highest ranking card wins the trick. It's really a german version of spades or hearts. Typically, players must make bids and "call" for suits to follow. Either play a card, draw a card from the deck, or discard. Imagine The Settlers of Catan but it's a three-player card game. Eliminate each player and score the most points. The card art is vonderful. This is probably the best three player game ever made. It sounds like a big brain game, but really isn't.

### 144. Slapshot (1982) ☐

Assume the role of a team manager with your wacky numbered hockey team. Like Schotten Totten, numbered cards are played to win "games." Each player has one goalie, two defensemen, and three forwards. Players put their starting token on the preseason part of the board. A player can trade, draft, or play a "game." To play a game, six cards are placed facedown and revealed at the same time. The highest score wins and the token moves closer to the playoffs. Once the playoffs is reached, the playoff player fights the second place player in the best of 7 games. Thus, the game becomes a two player game. Whoever wins the playoffs, wins Slapshot. The art in this game is psychedelic. It feels like a fictional cartoon about hockey. The art is the main motivation of playing this game. It feels like this game can be played with Rook cards, but it's the art that creates a suspension of disbelief. Constantly trading cards and getting the right set is apart of the strategy in this game. A hockey version of Condottiere. A wacky ludic sports game.

### 145. **Sleuth** (1971) ☐

A detective card game that is kind of like an advance version of Guess Who? There are two decks of cards, the gem cards and the search cards. There is one gem card every player is trying to find. Deal all gem cards evenly and one gem card left is the winning gem. Deal four search cards face-up for each player. Every player has a notepad which they write on to find the winning gem. On a player's turn, they may ask one question using one of their face-up search cards. The questions are about the numbers, colors, and gem type they are asking about. Once the question is asked using a search card, they discard it and draw another one. Turns keep going around until one player announces they would like to solve the hidden gem. Imagine Clue and Guess Who into a single card game. A portable deduction game. It brings out the detective in everyone.

### 146. **Snit's Revenge / Runngus' Game** (1977) ☐

War games are somewhat realistic. Risk is an abstract war game that does not simulate war. Snit's Revenge is so abstract that the theme is alien and cartoonish. Tom Wham often introduces his games with a comic, and Snit's Revenge feels like a pulp comic book with a game attached to it, similar to The Awful Green Things From Outer Space. You throw dice in combat and move your alien chits around the belly of an alien in order to kill it. This could be a shorter version of Risk. Runngus's Game appeared a simplified version of the game in Dragon magazine. Chess is a normie game, but Snit's Revenge is a ludic game. The theme, mechanics, modular rules and player interaction all create ludic synergy. More ludic games should adopt the comic-book or cartoonish feel like in Snit's Revenge.

## 147. Space Hulk (1989) □

This is rather a rules-system than an actual game, just like HeroQuest. It's commonly played as a two-player game, but can feature a game master and addition players. One player plays the space marines, and the other player plays the aliens. Ideally, the space marine player is timed and his units take action points to move. The alien player has unlimited time and moves his "blips" one by one. A blip is revealed once a unit sees it. There can be 1 to 3 aliens under each blip. The map is made up of modular corridors that leads straight or turns corners. The game is played by choosing a scenario and following the objective it describes, like a roleplaying game. There is no clear definition what is a space hulk game, The game is usually a contest between the players and the game master. Space Hulk fans have made up their own maps and shared them with one another. The game's strategy is a mixed between the placement of units and successful dice rolling. Any game could be played with Space Hulk. Everything is detailed from the weapons each unit carries, their movement, and to any special powers they might have. Space Hulk is very modular and naturally creates ludic synergy. It's a game that pays tribute to English science-fiction and 2000AD comics. A cult classic.

## 148. Splendor (2014) □

An economic game that uses gems to determine payment. Players buy cards until they have 15 points or more at the start of their turn. There are 12 cards to buy in the market determined by the cost, three victory cards, five piles of gems, and one pile of gold. On a players turn, the player may draw three different gem tokens from the five gem piles, draw two gems of the same color on one pile that has at least three gems, buy a card from the market, or reserve a card by taking it and placing it face down and gain 1 gold piece which acts as all gem types. Each card from the market has a cost in gems and rewards the player with an infinite amount of gems in the corner of the card. Eventually, the player does not have to spend time drawing more gems and relies on his purchased cards to buy more cards. Some cards have victory points on them. Players purchase things which accumulate buying bigger things until the game is over. Splendor is a game about investment and buying. Nothing special, just simple to understand. A modern version of Bazaar.

### 149. **Spy Alley** (1992) □

A bluffing game about spies on a Parcheesi board. Each player is a spy and must use deductive reasoning to find out the other opponent's identity. Players roll and move around a board to collect things and then must make it back to their home space to win the game. Players buy the objects from other players. However, like Heimlich & Co., players should keep a low profile so they won't expose themselves as being the suspected spy. At any point in the game, the player can call out an opponent's identity. If they are wrong, they are out of the game. If right, the opponent is out, and the player takes the opponent's objects. A Parcheesi twist that mixes deduction games like Sleuth and Heimlich & Co. A lot of actions are determine by roll and move. You buy items like in Monopoly, and have to be sneaky about it. A few mechanics can create ludic synergy. Spy Alley is a model to understand game design.

### 150. **Star Traders** (1987) □

Issac Asimov once played this game with Steve Jackson. A golden age game that targeted science-fiction readers. There are player powers like in Cosmic Encounter, and the game is somewhat like Merchant of Venus. Players roll dice to move, they spend money, and have cards to increase their statistics. On a player's turn, they make a move, perform one action, and draw a luck card. After rolling and moving, the player may, as an action, may build a station, add an engine to their ship, or make a petition. A petition can change the game in your favor. To win the game, you have to contact the emperor. It is a simple pick-up and deliver game mixed with a slew of rule breaking and petition creating mechanics. An artsy game that is organically modular. A simple and more chaotic version of Merchant of Venus. Highly recommended!

### 151. **Star Trek: The Enterprise 4 Encounter** (1985) ☐

From the makers of Cosmic Encounter, this is ludic attempt at the Star Trek brand. The game is basically a set-collection game around a Parcheesi board. You roll a die to move. If you land on an empty space, you draw an adventure card. Some cards belong to a certain character. If that player has that card, the player who owns that character may ask for that card. Combat works like Cosmic Encounter where cards are played. It's a simple pick up and delivery system mixed with lots of random and personal encounters. Manipulation is key to this game. A lot ludic potential is hidden with every move. Every ludic must own this game.

### 152. **Star Wars TCG** ☐

An underrated trading card game by Richard Garfield that was the last of the Deckmaster series. The object of the game is to control two of the three areas. There are three type of cards for each area: Space, Ground, and Character. Space goes first, followed by Ground, and then Character. Each card has a speed number, which determines what card attacks first. The power value throws an X amount of dice. The health determines the card's life. The opposing player rolls an X amount of dice from the power value, and damage is done on a roll of 4, 5, or 6. This damage is absorbed into the opposing units health. Cards are discard once their health reaches zero. Income is determined by a die roll and other factors. Cards are brought into play facedown with advancement tokens. They are ready to play once they reach their cost requirement. Another strategic part of this game is determining setup. Cards are placed into each area until they reach a certain amount of cost points. A bad setup can mess up the game for a player. This is a great war game that focuses solely on dice combat. While one area is open, one area can be dominated by the other player. This is the only "dicefest" TCG in existence, and a really good game next to Netrunner. A cult classic.



### 153. Star Wars: Escape from the Death Star (1990) ☐

Designed by Stephen Hand, this is one of the only good Star Wars board games ever made. A cooperative game where players must get out of the Death Star. When a player lands on a colored square, they must draw a card from that deck. Sometimes battles occur, and this is resolved by rolling a die. The random nature of this game makes it deliberately difficult for players to win. If one player is captured, everyone fails. Know the odds, and cater to them. The game is more of a puzzle. However, the randomness is what makes the game fun. And enjoying the die rolls and card draws is the same type of delusional fun found in Candy Land. Escape from the Death Star is very similar to Zombies in My Pocket. Enjoy this game with friends.

### 154. Stellar Conquest / Reach for the Stars (1975) ☐

It is rumored that the band The Human League took their name from this board game. It's a classic game that predates the "4X" or Master of Orion type game that came a few decades later. The board is a hex grid map that contains stars, which can be colonized for resources. Each player starts at the opposite corner of the board and moves to the center. Randomness happens with setup and colonization. Dice is rolled to determine success or failure. Unlike pick-up and delivery, this game is a traveling salesman question of racing towards planets and resources. Stellar Conquest is really a pencil and paper game at heart. The chits are like germs that reach out and create more resources. This is a tech building game. It's a fight to build the bigger civilization. For super science-fiction aficionados. A must play.

## 155. **Strat-O-Matic** (1961) ☐

The first collectible card game ever. A game about baseball. Each player drafts a baseball team. Each card tries to simulate a real baseball player from a specific year. Every year, Strat-O-Matic releases new baseball cards for the MLB season. Cards can be mixed and matched to create a dream baseball team. The cards rely on the results of rolling a pair of dice. The rules of baseball apply. Dice are rolled against the pitcher to determine the hit. It's a dice game dictated by cards. Strat-O-Matic players often craft their own baseball fields for their cards. Or they just play quick games and predict future baseball games. These cards are for fortune tellers. Cards go up in price by their statistics and historical significance. Gimmicks often try to transform normal activities into board games. Strat-O-Matic does this extremely well. Normies who play Strat-O-Matic can be proselytized into Ludism. Read Glenn Guzzo's Strat-O-Matic Fanatics about board game design and early Ludism.

## 156. **Stratego Conquest** (2015) ☐

Instead of playing Stratego, it's much better to play it with three other players. Stratego Conquest is multiplayer Stratego. The map is circular and pieces can move in a diagonal fashion. This game also includes cards to draw and play. Politics can be backstabbing. Experimentation is required. The early game starts with players predicting which ranks belongs to who. Alliances start forming during the mid-game. The game can be self-destructive if leader-bashing or kingsmaking is allowed. Cards are played to stop political control. The energy and excitement increase with more players. Stratego Conquest should be played outside and in a park with other friendly strangers. 3 to 4 player Stratego is better.

## 157. **StreetSoccer** (2002) ☐

A board game that simulates an abstract version of soccer. The soccer field is a 6 by 10 square-filled board. Players setup by placing soccermen in their designated squares. The soccermen are moved to kick the ball and defend the goal by rolling dice. Players are playing a turn-based game of soccer. It's like Chess, but the pieces are moved by the roll of the dice. Like Heimlich & Co., each players must manage each action point they spend. The game is so simple, it should be the preferred method to play turn-base soccer. A genius game that uses the action point system. This is what all Euros should be. It's all about verbs. The ludic way to play soccer.

## 158. **Superpowers** (2009) ☐

I would recommend Axis and Allies, but Superpowers takes the game to another level. Superpowers is an Axis and Allies variant but feels like its own game. The object is to control more capitals than the other players. The game is unique because it allows the constant creation and breaking of alliances. There is also a technology tree that can reach all the way to nuclear missiles. Up to 12 six-sided dice are used in combat. The game boost itself as being an advance war game because of the heavy combat that constantly happens. Superpowers takes Axis and Allies to its limits like Attack. For anyone who likes messing around with tons of little plastic figures and throwing lots of dice.

## 159. Supremacy (1984) ☐

A very colorful and futuristic war game that looks like Risk, but isn't. Units are placed on land and sea. The map looks like a retro computer program of the world. Every superpower starts with five to six land units. You first pay salaries, then add more units, then you may do any of the three actions: sell, buy, or build. These actions will change drastically through the game, as resources dip and rise through certain actions. Units move to new spaces to conquer more resources. Supremacy is a resource speculation game mixed with classic dice rolling. Nuclear missiles can wipe out an opponent if planned right. The game has several expansions and it is recommended to play with them all. Imagine if Risk and Monopoly were combined into one game. A very artsy game from the neon future.

## 160. Tactics II (1958) ☐

They say this is the first modern war game ever. Everyone has played it before they got into war games, at least for the older generation. The map is made up of little squares and some color areas. There are two teams of blue vs red with each a capital. The object of the game is to defeat the other side (obviously). Chits have both a combat and movement statistic. Terrain penalties apply. Combat is determine by a chart which players must consult. Results may vary. Nintendo's Advance Wars took this game, and Legend of Camelot, and made it into an anime Shogi game for kids. Tactics is straightforward simple. Move units, attack each other, and find the best route to conquer the capital. Tactics also tries to simulate a war game by adding in extra rules about the surroundings, like weather and terrain. Game masters add additional rules to the game to make it more modular. Tactics is a great template to create virtual reality. An old timey war game for Ludics.

### 161. **Tales of the Arabian Nights** (2009) ☐

A storytelling board game that is actually a gamebook. There is a board, a moving pawn, a die, cards, charts, and a huge gamebook. Basically, just like in Barbarian Prince, events are looked up in the gamebook. Things happen, and choices are made. There are 2000 plus paragraphs in the gamebook, so a lot of choices can be made. The object is to accomplish your mission, but your mission might end up through the wrong choices. Points can influence the outcome of those choices. This is the most advance gamebook board game on the market. There are more choices than what a Fighting Fantasy book or even Barbarian Prince can offer. Everyone has a different story to tell in this game. The second-person narrative will be realized if more games like these are published.

### 162. **Talisman** (1983) ☐

One of the greatest board games ever made. A game that mixes Parcheesi and Dungeons and Dragons together. Players either choose a character or randomly determine one. On a turn, a player rolls a die, and chooses which way his character will go. This usually results in drawing a card from the deck. The card may be a creature to fight, an event, a mini-game, an item, or something special. Throughout the game, players are trying to reach the center of the map. At that point, they become god and kill all their opponents. A quick game could end by being the last surviving character. But just like Dungeons and Dragons, the game does not end when your character dies. You can enter the game as a new character and start a new life. There is no objective to Talisman, as it is an infinite Parcheesi game that can tell a story about a players character. There is also expansion maps that add a Dungeon, a City, and The Warp (think Gene Wolfe). All combat is determine by a die roll. Stats are increase with experience. The stronger you are, the bigger creatures you can fight. Talisman represents everything what a ludic game is. An ever-changing, modular, mutator board game with no clear objectives. Ludism is about creating ludic synergy and getting high off of it. Talisman is what all board games should be like.

### 163. Tamsk (1998) □

An abstract game by Kris Burm that uses sand hourglasses as playing pieces. Players must move the hourglasses to an adjacent place and flip them over. The object of the game is to get the opponent in a position where he can't move or that his hourglass runs out of sand. This is an artsy gimmick game against analysis paralysis, as players must make quick moves to flip the hourglasses. The board has 37 spaces in a hexagon where each player has three three-minute hourglasses. There are three black hourglasses and three red hourglasses. A ring is placed over the hourglass once it moves. Once an hourglass runs out of sand, it cannot move for the rest of the game. The time pressure is an illusion and the game could be played without the hourglasses. But the anxiety of moving and flipping them is what makes the game fun. The object is really to block your opponent. There is also a 15-second grey hourglass that forces players to make their moves. An interesting game that would be cool to play in an actual desert or on a beach. It's fun to role play as Father Time.

### 164. Terrace (1992) □

An abstract game that was accidentally featured in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, which made the game famous. The game could be played on an 8x8 Reversi board, but because of the leveling and the different size pawns, this makes Terrace a unique 3D game. The object of the game is to capture the opponent's "T-piece" or move onto the opponent's corner. On your turn, you move a piece on the same elevation or move up a terrace. This game is basically "space checkers." A cosmic game to play, but also really cool to look at like Dejarik. Very artsy. It claims to be "the future of strategy games." I hope this game replaces checkers.

### 165. TerraTopia (1993) ☐

This is an obscure cooperative children's game made Peter and Greg Olotka of Cosmic Encounter. It takes place on a Parcheesi board where each player has a unique power. Each player has to tell a story about how they would transform into a creature and overcome the obstacle. The game master can be a judge on how this would effect the results of the event. It is easy for children to make up stuff. Different dice are rolled and random stuff occurs. Like Tales of the the Arabian Nights, events are consulted in the rulebook. The game is a party roleplaying game, similar to Bullwinkle and Rocky Roleplaying Party Game. An experimental and social ludic game. Roleplaying games could be taught to beginners using TerraTopia. More games should have the elegance of TerraTopia.

### 166. The Awful Green Things From Outer Space (1979) ☐

Tom Wham's classic dueling war game that begins with a comic and ends with a choose-your-own-adventure narrative. Chits are placed around a circular spaceship map. One side has to escape the ship, and the awful green things must kill the crew members. Like Tactics, chits are moved from adjacent area to area and strategic position is everything. Dice is used during combat. This is a more tactical version of Snit's Revenge. When the crew player wins, he must go through a choose-your-own adventure ending. This can be memorized, and really only works the first time you play this game. It's a small, portable two-player war game that can be enjoyed like a Saturday morning cartoon. Wham is telling a cartoonish story. Theme is more important than the game itself. There is also a print-your-own expansion to replace the awful green things with orange things. Highly recommended to learn about Ludism.

### 167. **The Big Cheese** (1998) ☐

A simple auctioning game that was made up in a single game design workshop session. The game has just 36 cards and a few tokens. Players bid on corporate projects done by worker rats. Each turn, a worker is removed from a project. A dice roll determines the projects value. The object of the game is to score 200 points. A simple bidding game that can be brought anywhere. The art is funny and like an animated Saturday morning cartoon. Rats acting like corporate drones rings true on how capitalism oppresses us.

### 168. **The Creature That Ate Sheboygan** (1979) ☐

A war game where the player designs a monster and tries to destroy the city as much as possible. The opposing player protects the city and tries to kill the monster player. Players can choose a scenario or make up their own. This game is rather a modular system akin to Space Hulk. All units in this game have an attack and defense statistic. Constantly you have to look up at tables in this game. The map looks like a city, similar to the one in Plague!. The Creature That Ate Sheboygan is a toolbox. Imagination and adding more rules makes the game better. A creative and humorous war game similar to Invasion of the Air-eaters.



### 169. **The Godfather Game** (1971) ☐

This, along with Risk, is one of the games that inspired the creation of Cosmic Encounter. The first edition of the game is shaped like a violin suitcase. The Godfather Game is a simple area enclosure game like Go. Players buy stones to place on the board. Cards are drawn to determine a random result. Players vie to control each area. You can sell back stones which don't benefit you. A simple dot-to-dot war game with economics and random events.

### 170. **The Great Khan Game** (1989) ☐

Intended to be sold as an Advance Dungeons and Dragons Second Edition product, The Great Khan Game really has nothing to do with Forgotten Realms or roleplaying (maybe). This is a war game with a mix of card games like Canasta. You draw cards and "meld" them to create armies. These armies take over other territories, in a coup or by direct combat. Dice are used during combat and to determine some effects. Conquering certain territories will give you resource benefits. Adjacent territories can create allies and improve a players forces. Melds are used to attack other melds. The game is over once "the history card" is drawn. Whoever has the highest score wins. The deck acts like a game clock, and therefor, the game could last forever with no true objective. Like Cosmic Encounter, players are vying to control territory and make alliances. The map is colorful and cartoonish. This is a card game is similar to Condottiere. The Great Khan Game is a cult classic game that needs more attention.

### 171. **The Last Starfighter: The Tunnel Chase** (1984) ☐

This game is ridiculous that it can support up to 20 players! Has anyone played with that many? The object of the game is to be the last player alive. The modular tiles provided is similar to Magic Realm. Dice are rolled most of the time. Each player has a ship, and basically races around a maze till everyone dies. Think of it like a death race. The game acts like a huge party game of Craps. Players keep rolling and risking until someone gets out. It's a lot like Hot Potato or Limbo. A very small racing game that was played during recess. It's ludic because the components are so small and the design is so absurd.

### 172. **The Mystic Wood / The Sorcerer's Cave** (1978) ☐

One of the first modular map games ever. It was intended to be a family game to introduce concepts of Dungeons and Dragons. Tiles are randomly place to create dungeons, like in DungeonQuest and DeathMaze. Each player has a unique power and must complete an individual quest. Dice are used as usual. This was likely the first game ever to introduce random tile placement. Think of it like a children's version of DeathMaze. A rival of Warlocks & Warriors. Ludic storytelling using tiles!

### 173. The Romance of Three Kingdoms Card Game (1999) ☐

This is a strange Chinese game supposedly made up by a Chinese Magic: The Gathering player. It has a hilarious back of the box description and captures the essence of both roleplaying and the "Take That" mechanic. The game works like rock-paper-scissors. Players vie for control of the resources presented on the board and play cards to interact with one another. The game is meant for Chinese people and is a proponent of Chinese nationalism. Dice rolling does play a part in this game as well as hand management. The rules are translated from the Chinese, so a lot of rules are confusing. Leader-bashing is the main motivation to play this game. A war game that is actually better than Munchkin.

### 174. The Star Game (1989) ☐

An occultist game practiced by The Order of The Nine Angles. It was first introduced in the esoteric pamphlet Naos: A Practical Guide To Modern Magick. The game is meant to be a ludic tool to find deeper meaning within meditation. Players are required to make up their own game. There is suppose to be a guru, or two "compatible" people playing the game. Each board of the game is named after a star and is metaphorical for one's place in the universe. The game is an esoteric themed version of checkers with a twist of occult engagement. Only initiates are allowed to play this game. The skill of the player is determine by their devotion to the occult. It's more fun to read the rules then to play the game. as The Star Game is more about occult engagement than anything. This is a spiritual game tied to the creation of Ludism.

**175. The Warriors of Batak** (1982) ☐

This game has an amazing box cover and theme. The object of the game is to hold certain points on the map. This is a pocket war game similar to Invasion of the Air-Eaters and The Creature That Ate Sheboygan. The Warriors of Batak is a kooky story about lizard people and nuclear pollution. This is an asymmetrical game where each side has different rules. A lot of other unit types make this game very tactical. The map and art is far-out and groovy. An introductory hex war game. The theme alone creates ludic synergy.

**176. Through The Desert** (1998) ☐

A abstract game about camels by Reiner Knizia. The object of the game is to get the highest score. Oasis chits are randomly placed across the hex desert board. Players can get points by acquiring water holes, touch the oasis chits, or enclose areas on the board like Tron bikes. On a turn, a player places down two camels, like placing down tracks in TransAmerica. The game is over once one group of Camels is depleted. Obviously, Ticket To Ride stole their concept from this game. The camels are incredibly hypnotic. The only reason to play this game is because of camels. Camels, camels, and more camels. If your favorite animal is a camel, you will love this game.

### 177. **Timber Tom** (2008) ☐

A dice rolling game about hiking on a 3D board with pegs. The object of the game is to find two pouches of gold and return them back to home base. You plant forrest barriers to hinder your opponent. The trees can be chopped down with an axe or chainsaw. You could also use a helicopter and fly over. Unpredictable hazards include quicksand, landslides, and avalanches. Movement is determined by where you start, as terrain hindrance is an issue. The game is pretty to look at and is similar to Fireball Island. Timber Tom has hidden ludic potential. A new way to play Parcheesi.

### 178. **Search for The Emperors Treasure** (1981) ☐

This is a classic game by Tom Wham that tries to take the system of Dungeons and Dragons and add a map and chits to it. Each player has a unique character with different statistics. Much of the game is numbers interacting with one another. It's somewhat of an incomplete game and requires advance players to add in extra rules. You move around a Parcheesi board and find clues to where the treasure is. This game shares similarities with its sister game Mertwig's Maze. Dice are rolled to determine combat and random encounters. This game works well with children to introduce both roleplaying and war games. Tom Wham's cartoons makes the game animated and alive. A nice treasure hunting game about exploration and risk.

### 179. **Time Breaker** (2019) ☐

A short game where time traveling is possible. Each player must arrest the time breaker cube at the leftmost part of the maze and return it back to the center. The 5 by 5 board is made up of tiles which are randomly shuffled and placed around the center. Players start with three cards. On your turn, you draw a card, and then may move your pawn through the gate, play a card, or "wormhole" a card by playing the top card of the deck. Once a player reaches the cube, it is under arrest, and the player must return it to the center. That player is the winner, unless the cube returns to the center by itself, everyone loses. A modular game that mixes "Take That" cards with maze racing. A great game that will one day have a professional and competitive scene.

### 180. **Trade Winds / Buccaneer** (1960) ☐

A family pirate game where pirates race to loot islands for treasure. The Trade Winds edition of the game is rare, but the preferred edition. The rules are somewhat ambiguous and are open for interpretation. Each player has a pirate ship where they roll a die and move their ship closer to the island in the center of the board. The board is like a square grid similar to another Parker Brothers game, Camelot. Cards are played in the same "Take That" tradition to create conflict. There is also a rule which states that if a piece of the treasure falls off the boat, the player has to return back to the island (this was meant as a kiddie rule for dexterity and theme). Trade Winds is more aligned with theme than the game itself. The game does not restrict players and creates a freewheeling environment for direct conflict. This is a wacky racing game that incubated many other "Take That" games.

## 181. TransAmerica (2001) ☐

A railroad connecting game played in three rounds. The goal is to connect five secret cities by placing down tracks. The board is a map of the United States. Each player picks a place where to start on the board. Movement is triangular. On your turn, you build two tracks connecting from the last one. Other players can connect to your tracks to become connected. Once all five cities are connected, they are revealed and points are scored. TransAmerica is "Connect the dots: the board game." Just connect tracks and win. TransAmerica is enjoyed on bigger boards and thus is similar to Ataxx. A simple abstract game with an unnecessary theme. The brick version of Go.

## 182. Unexploded Cow (2001) ☐

A card game that where the investment is in exploding cows. Cards are placed down in a line, and a die is rolled to explode them. However, the player can end up exploding another players cow benefiting them. Counting the number on the die to the number of cows, the cow explodes and rewards that player with more money to buy more cows and buildings. The other players are trying to stop each other from exploding their cows, or trying to make them explode the wrong cows. At the end of the game, all cows must explode to add up the score. Whoever has the most money wins. The strategy in this game is about the bomb blowing off the right cows and where they are in the line. Cows are placed only for the luck factor to generate future income. It's fun to roll a die and see which cow blows up. Lining up the cows for destruction is apart of the fun. Violence against animals is cool.

### 183. Vampire: The Eternal Struggle / Jyhad (1994) ☐

A trading card game that was once second to Magic: The Gathering. The purpose of this game was to create a rich, complex multiplayer trading card game. Vampire is not really played with two people. Instead, it acts like a game of Bridge. The object of the game is to be the last surviving vampire. This is done by taking life from other players. There are two decks of cards, a character deck and an event deck. Some character cards give the player an ability to vote on democratic choices. Always, players must attack their "prey" to their left, as their "predator" is to the right. This circular motion forces players into a game of politics. Because it is a Deckmaster game, every deck is different, and players constantly make assumptions what cards each player will have. Trading card games were a thing of the past. However, Vampire was one of the most elitist TCGs ever made. Probably the best political TCG ever made.

### 184. Venus Needs Men! (2006) ☐

A board game that takes influence from Cosmic Encounter and Risk. Unlike the card game Illuminati, the game takes place on a game board. Each player has a unique power and vies to control certain areas of the board. Cards look exactly like the ones in Cosmic Encounter, including a card type that "zaps" a player's power. The object of the game is to score an amount of ships back on one's home planet. A classic "Take That" card game mix with a Hare & Tortoise-style racing game. An exotic game about an alien takeover that will eventually happen.



### 185. **Viktory II** (2006) □

Unlike most sophisticated war games, Viktory II is played on a giant hexagon full of random hexes. This modular nature creates a unique game experience every time. Each player has units and buildings. Buildings create more units. Towns can be upgraded to cities. Combat is determine by dice. The game has been compared as the board game version of Nintendo's Advance Wars. Viktory II is all about building and buying better units and where to place them. The game is a clone of Nexus Ops or Warcraft: The Board Game. Think of Catan as a war game, and you will get Viktory II.

### 186. **Villages** (1991) □

There is a couple of versions of this Tom Jolly game. It was first a pencil and paper game where players roll dice to determine resources and figure out what to spend it on. The second version added in cards, which were auctioned off and bid on. These cards give players resources and special powers. The object of the game is to gain an X amount of victory points. Villages is a rare game and was never picked up by any major publisher. Perhaps the second edition of Villages is very similar to a bidding game like Sultan. Meanwhile, Roll Through The Ages perfected the pencil and paper resource game. The first edition of Villages was the first to do the paper and pencil resource game. Whatever edition you may come across, both editions have a very similar style of play. This is a simple game with many mind-expanding options. You gain special powers and abuse the rules to increase ludic synergy.

### 187. Vinci (1999) ☐

A board game like Imperial. A pure Euro with a medium level of player interaction. The goal is to reach 100 victory points. Each area can only have one chit in it at a time. Random control chits are drawn to determine a resource order. Each player selects a civilization to start with. Imagine this as the Euro version of Cave Troll with a map of Europe. Ludics don't like Euros most of the time, as they delude players from self-expression. In Vinci, players can attack adjacent areas like in Risk. Since there is no dice rolling, combat is resolved by spending resources. Vinci is a simple economic area control game. Only tokens are used for everything. A different kind of Euro game that focuses on area control.

### 188. Wacky Wacky West (1991) ☐

A square grid with a cowboy theme where players protect buildings to earn the highest score. There is a secret goal card with a building that each player has to protect. Like DungeonQuest, players place tiles in order to cover up buildings. To demolish a town house, players must make a vote on it. Like Democracy, "Yes" and "No" cards are played. Once all the tiles are played, or there is no more legal moves, the game is over. Imagine dominos, Waterworks, or DungeonQuest mixed with a political Euro. Also think of a competitive version of Saboteur. The fun part is voting which instantly creates a political environment. Political dominoes for Ludics.

### 189. Warlocks & Warriors (1977) ☐

A Parcheesi game with a fantasy theme. The player either chooses a warlock or a warrior. Roll dice to move. The goal is to escort the princess home. Either the player loses turns or moves away from the path. This game is actually a variant of Candy Land with dice combat. Warlocks & Warriors vastly improve play with Dungeon! or rules taken from Dungeons and Dragons. A nostalgic game with amazing art and vintage appeal. Warlocks & Warriors is one of the games that gave birth to Ludism.

### 190. Warrior Knights (2006) ☐

A classic political and fantasy warfare board game. The exact order of play is random. Players are trying to pass agenda cards that change the rules of the game. There is often diplomatic events where votes are acquired to do certain things. Taxation and parliament phases happen at unpredictable moments that will change a players strategy. Players control four barons which are unique from one another. Barons are used to control the board and attack one another. Warrior Knights is a unique mix of democracy, auctioning, and area control mechanics. Rules change in this game like in Britannia. While sophisticated, Warrior Knights is enjoyed with more than three players. An English classic in the tradition of classic Games Workshop board games.

## 191. Web of Power / China / Han (2000) □

An area control game where cards are played to claim territory. Each area has a number of "houses" on it. The player that has the majority of the region gets all of the points for it. Second place gets less points. Points are also rewarded by "alliances" and lines. On your turn, you play a card to place a piece, or exchange a card for a different one. Whoever has the highest score wins the game. Web of Power came out before Ticket to Ride. It presented the traveling salesman question with a Euro twist. There are different versions and expansions of Web of Power that have different maps. A pioneer in the genre of route claiming games.

## 192. Wiz-War (1985) □

One of the greatest ludic board games ever made. It is a duel that takes place on random maze tiles. Each wizard player has to kill the other wizard or steal both their treasures and place them back on their home base. One their life total of 15 goes down to zero, they are dead. Combat happens with a deck of cards. A wizard can move up to 4 spaces (by the roll of a d4), or increase it with a number card. Wizards can play spell cards to attack one another or do something else. Wacky spells include walking through walls, teleporting, creating a barrier, drawing more cards, and other things you would expect from a trading card game. In fact, it is advised that you play Wiz-War with 1000 blank cards and let players write their own rules on them. It's a card game at heart with movement like in Time Breaker. Wiz-War is something special to those who know The Glass Bead Game.

### 193. Wizard's Quest (1979) □

A Risk-like board game about finding treasure. The board is a round island. Player order is determined by rolling dice. On a player's turn, they may play a petition card. These cards do something special. Attacks are similar like in Risk. The object of the game is to collect three treasures belonging to a player. Orcs spawn and create trouble. The dragon flies space to space with a die roll killing units, while the wizard helps players. A space can never have more than 4 orcs on it. Otherwise, they attack. Orcs are like a virus and can win the game if too powerful. Wizard's Quest has all the interactivity and politics of a classic ludic board game. A cult classic fantasy game about orcs, dragons, and rolling dice.

### 195. Yinsh (2003) □

A two-player abstract game by Kris Burm. Players must move around rings and flip the markers to get five-in-a-row. If they do this three times, they win the game. On a player's turn, a marker is dropped in the center of the ring, and then the rings move in any of the six directions. Rings may jump over any number of markers to turn over, like in Reversi. Once there is a five-in-a-row, the ring is scored. The board will get crowded as the other player competes for your markers. Yinsh reminds me of Myst. I was surprised this wasn't featured in a point-and-click computer game of the mid-90s. An alien board game made for a steampunk generation.

## 196. Zendo (2001) □

A game that can be played with Looney Pyramids (and its own provided pieces). One player is "the master" and the other player is "the student." The object of the game is to follow the master's design. Either ask the master if it's right, or make a guess about the design or rule. Once a player guesses the design or rule, that player wins. Zendo is very similar to Nomic and Lemma. It's like cloud-spotting, but "cloud-spotting" creativity. It is a game-design exercise where players critique each others designs. Zendo can be played with any objects. A ludic classic.

## 197. Zèrtz (1999) □

A two-player abstract game by Kris Burm. Marbles jump over each other on a shrinking board. The object is to either capture an X amount of colored marbles or capture three marbles of each colors. The player surface is made up of 37 marble holders, which disappear every turn. You place a marble on the board, and then take away a marble holder from the outside. Eventually, there will be force interactions where the marbles will make a jump. Sometimes, it is good to make a marble jump so it's close to the outside. If the marble holder is isolated with the marble on it, the player also captures it. Another game that reminds me of Myst (Exile in particular). Zèrtz is an artsy game made up by steampunk aliens.

### 198. **Zombie in my Pocket** (2007) ☐

A pocket, modular tile solitaire game. The object of the game is to find the token and bury it in the graveyard. A player first starts on the home tile. The tile deck is shuffled, and when entering a new room, a room tile is drawn. An event card is drawn to determine if there are zombies in the room. The game begins at 9PM, but slowly escalates to 10pm and 11pm. The player loses if the clock reaches 12pm. Different events happen because the clock will be at 9pm, 10pm or 11pm. That means more zombies, taking damage, or something bad happening. Once the player finds the token room, he must head to the backyard entrance tile and use the backyard tiles. The player wins once he survives the graveyard tile with the token. A very portable game that also has many variants. This game can be played with multiple players. A simple game to understand game design.

### 199. **Zombies!!!** (2001) ☐

A miniature game where zombies try to kill you. You must complete the objective in every scenario. The game is made up of modular tiles which are placed on together to create a map. Hypothetically, you can be a game master and create your own roleplaying game. **Zombies!!!** had many expansions that add on to the game and introduce more miniatures. It's like a toy box full of toy soldiers that can be use to recreate an imaginary war scene. The entire game is just that... zombies. A modular game that rather acts like a toolbox than an actual game. I remember buying \$250 worth of Zombie products from Howard M. Fesler. I remember him saying, "Is that it governor?" How I miss those days.

## Appendix I:

Ludism requires initiates to be familiar with these books. Please read them.

- A Gamut of Games – Sid Sackson ☐
- A History of Card Games – David Parlett ☐
- Bachelor Pad Economics – Aaron Clarey ☐
- Board Game Design Advice – Gabe Barrett ☐
- Challenges for Game Designers – Brenda Brathwaite & Ian Schreiber ☐
- Characteristics of Games – Richard Garfield ☐
- Cheapass Games In Black and White: A Retrospective – James Ernest ☐
- Clockwork Game Design – Keith Burgun ☐
- Dice Games Properly Explained – Reiner Knizia ☐
- Dungeons & Dragons Rules Compendium (2010) ☐
- Dungeons & Dragons Rules Cyclopedia (1991) ☐
- Everyone Plays In The Library – Scott Nicholson ☐
- Family Games: The 100 Best – James Lowder ☐
- Finite and Infinite Games: A Vision of Life as Play and Possibility – James P. Carse ☐
- Game Design – Lewis Pulsipher ☐
- Game Design Theory – Keith Burgun ☐
- Game Design Workshop – Tracy Fullerton ☐
- Games People Play – Eric Berne ☐
- Half-Real – Jesper Juul ☐

- Hamlet's Hit Points – Robin D. Laws ☐
- Hobby Games: The 100 Best – James Lowder ☐
- Homo Ludens – Johan Huizinga ☐
- Introducing Game Theory: A Graphic Guide – Dr. Ivan and Tuvana Pastine ☐
- Language, Saussure and Wittgenstein: How to Play Games with Words – Roy Harris ☐
- Mindhacker – Ron & Marty Hale-Evans ☐
- Monopoly Strategy – Ken Koury ☐
- On Game Design – Andrew Rollings & Ernest Adams ☐
- On Game Design – Chris Crawford ☐
- On Interactive Storytelling – Chris Crawford ☐
- Osric: Old School Reference and Index Compilation – Stuart Marshall & Matt Finch ☐
- Playing Politics – Micheal Laver ☐
- Playing at the World: A History of Simulating – Jon Peterson ☐
- Rules of Play – Eric Zimmerman & Katie Salen ☐
- Second Person: Role-Playing and Story in Games and Playable Media – Pat Harrigan & Noah Wardrip-Fruin ☐
- Strat-O-Matic Fanatics – Glenn Guzzo ☐
- Stuff White People Like – Christian Lander ☐
- Tabletop Analog Game Design – Greg Costikyan & Drew Davidson ☐
- Tabletop Game Design for Video Game Designers – Ethan Ham ☐
- The Abolition of Work – Bob Black ☐



- The Art of Being Ruled - Wyndham Lewis ☐
- The Art of Computer Game Design - Chris Crawford ☐
- The Art of Game Design - Jesse Schell ☐
- The Art of Interactive Design - Chris Crawford ☐
- The Board Game Designer's Guide: The Easy 4 Step Process to Create Amazing Games That People Can't Stop Playing - Joe Slack ☐
- The Book of Highs - Edward Rosenfeld ☐
- The Classified Encyclopedia of Chess Variants - D.B. Pritchard ☐
- The Empty City - Andrew Looney ☐
- The Game of Life - Timothy Leary ☐
- The Game of Tarot - Michael Dummett ☐
- The Game-Players of Ganymede- Phillip K. Dick ☐
- The Glass Bead Game - Herman Hesse ☐
- The Grand Wheel - Barrington J. Bayley ☐
- The Infinite Board Game - W. Eric Martin ☐
- The Kobold Guide To Board Games - Mike Selinker ☐
- The Oxford History of Board Games - David Parlett ☐
- The Players of Games - Iain M. Banks ☐
- The White Box Essays - Jeremy Holcomb ☐
- Things We Think About Games - Will Hindmarch & Jeff Tidball ☐
- Total Diplomacy: The Art of Winning Risk - Ehsan Honary ☐

## Appendix II:

### The Future Pastimes Manifesto

1. It would have no dice.
2. No one would be eliminated.
3. You could have allies or win together.
4. Every player would be different.
5. Every game would be different.
6. You could attack or compromise.
7. It would not be of this world.
8. "If you can do that, then I can do this."
9. A license to cheat.

-Peter Olotka

Cited from "Risk" from Family Games:  
The 100 Best (2010) and "Fair Isn't  
Fun!" from Tabletop Analog Game  
Design (2011).

Francis Nally (1991-) was born and raised in Pennsylvania. He graduated from Rosemont College with a degree in English and Communications. Nally is a pioneer in the avant-garde blogging movement known as the “alt-left.” His writing has been compared to Jim Goad, Peter Sotos, and Katherine Dunn. Nally wrote two books under the pen name “pilleater,” **Almond Eyes, Baby Face** (2016) and **Trip** (2017). His band is Phteven Universe and has released four cassettes; Phteven Universe, おさかな  
といっしょ, illicit, and Asian

Girlfriend (all released in 2018). Nally's book, **A Manifesto About Stalking Patrick Hyland** (2018) is his first published book under his real name. His most recent books are **Queer Culture: A Transgressive Tradition. An Introduction for The Normie and The Misguided Artist** (2019) and **Ludism: Board Games That Will Get You High** (2019).

